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Zdenek Sebesta's **PERFECT
POTEZ 63-11**



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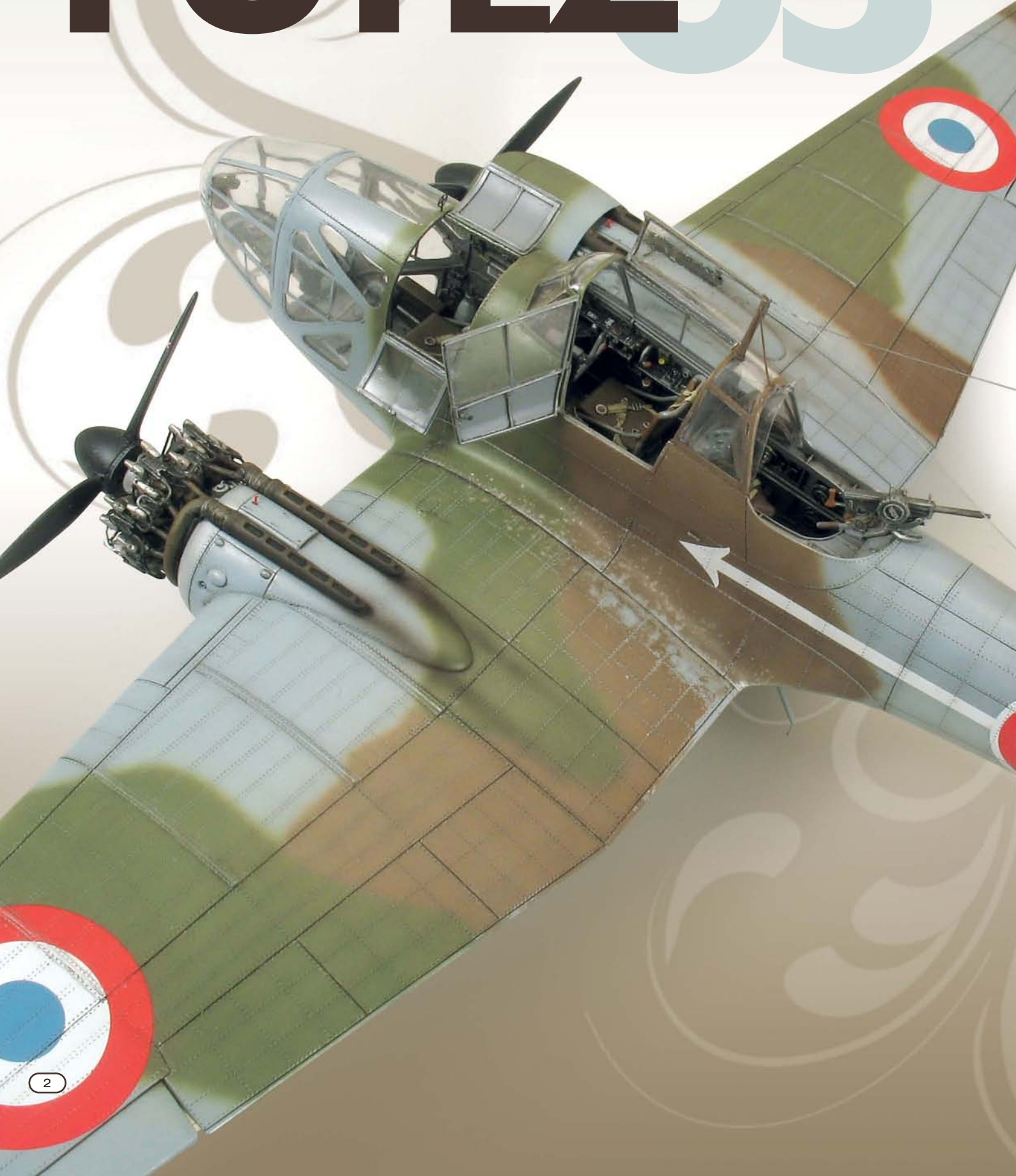
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ZDENEK SEBESTA BUILDS AZUR'S 1:48TH

POTEZ

63



-11



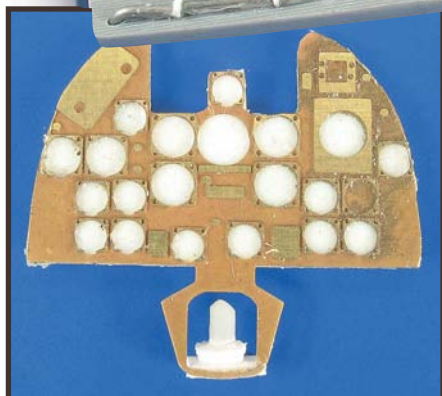
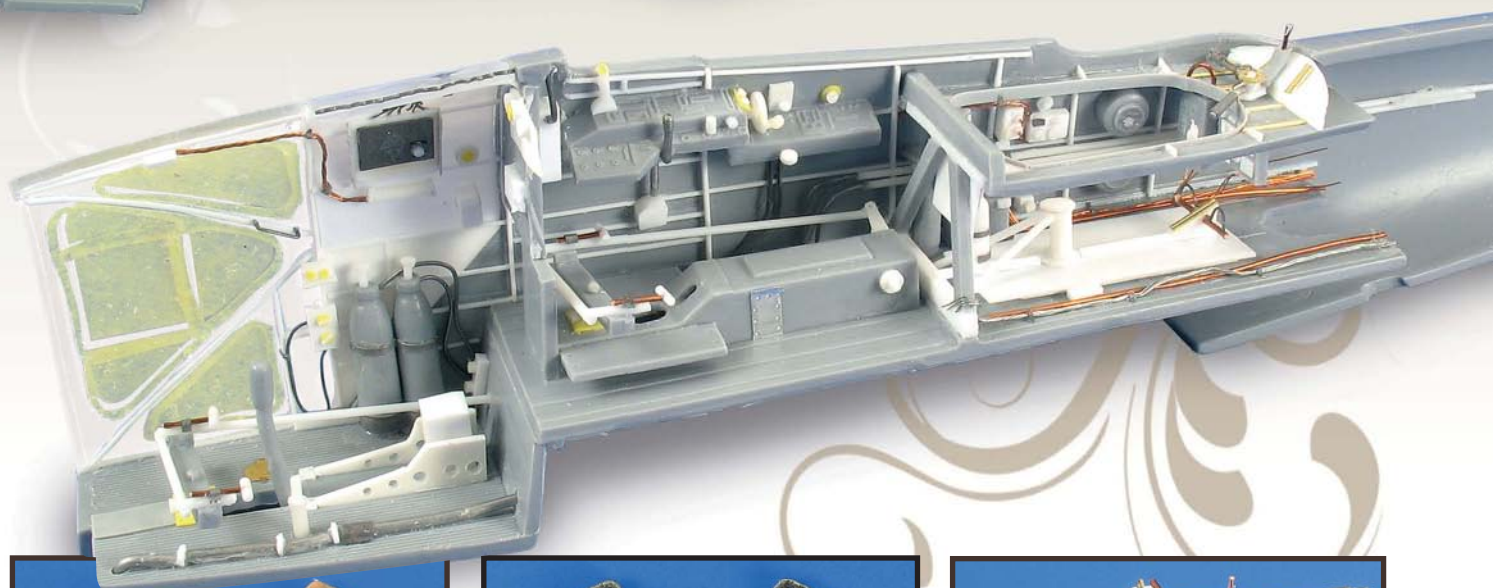
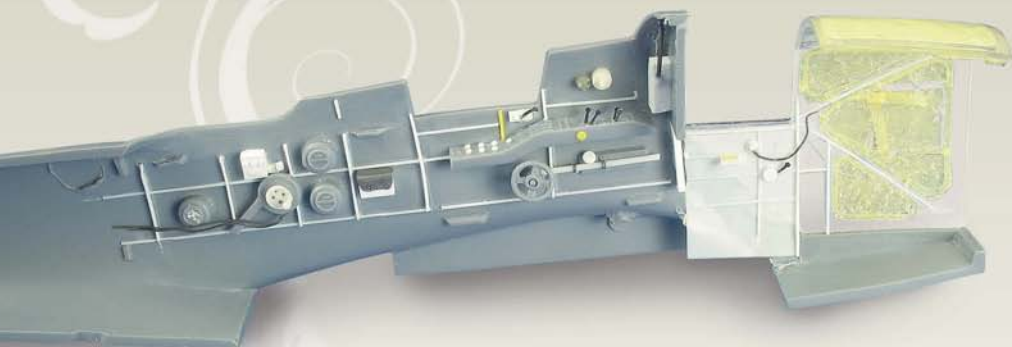
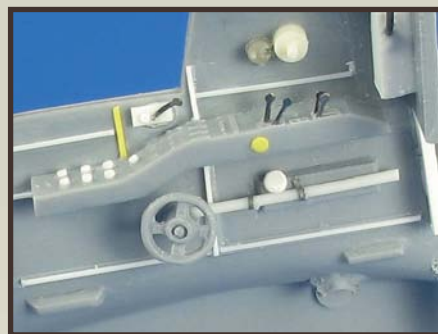
The Azur Company have always specialized primarily in models of French aircraft and have so far released kits of the Potez 63 family of aircraft in both 1/48th and 1/72nd scales.

This series of modern twin engined aircraft included the Potez 63-11 reconnaissance version and the Potez 630, 631 and 633 fighter and bomber versions, however the variant I have chosen to build here is the Potez 63-11 reconnaissance version which has a massive, extensively glazed nose as its main identifying feature. The main parts of the kit are made from relatively soft medium grey, plastic, the engines and small details are moulded from polyurethane resin and these are supplemented by a small photo-etched sheet, including seat belts and small surface details. Unfortunately, the instrument panel is not provided on the photoetched sheet.

The surface of the kit has finely engraved recessed panel lines which seem to correspond with available drawings, but given that the plane was of all metal construction, except for the moving control surfaces, I decided to add a number of rivet lines to augment the existing surface detail.

For this I used the popular Rossie the Riveter wheel set at a spacing of 0.55 mm and for reference various drawings were used, especially those published in earlier issues of the French magazine *Replic* and *AIR Magazine* along with the pull out plans from the latest publication on the Potez 63 by Mushroom Models Publications which is excellent and in my opinion a most necessary reference to build a detailed model, especially as it contains a plethora of photos which are essential when building a detailed model. Using these I decided to open the left engine and wing flaps but they also highlight the fact that most of the other kit details require amendment or modification!

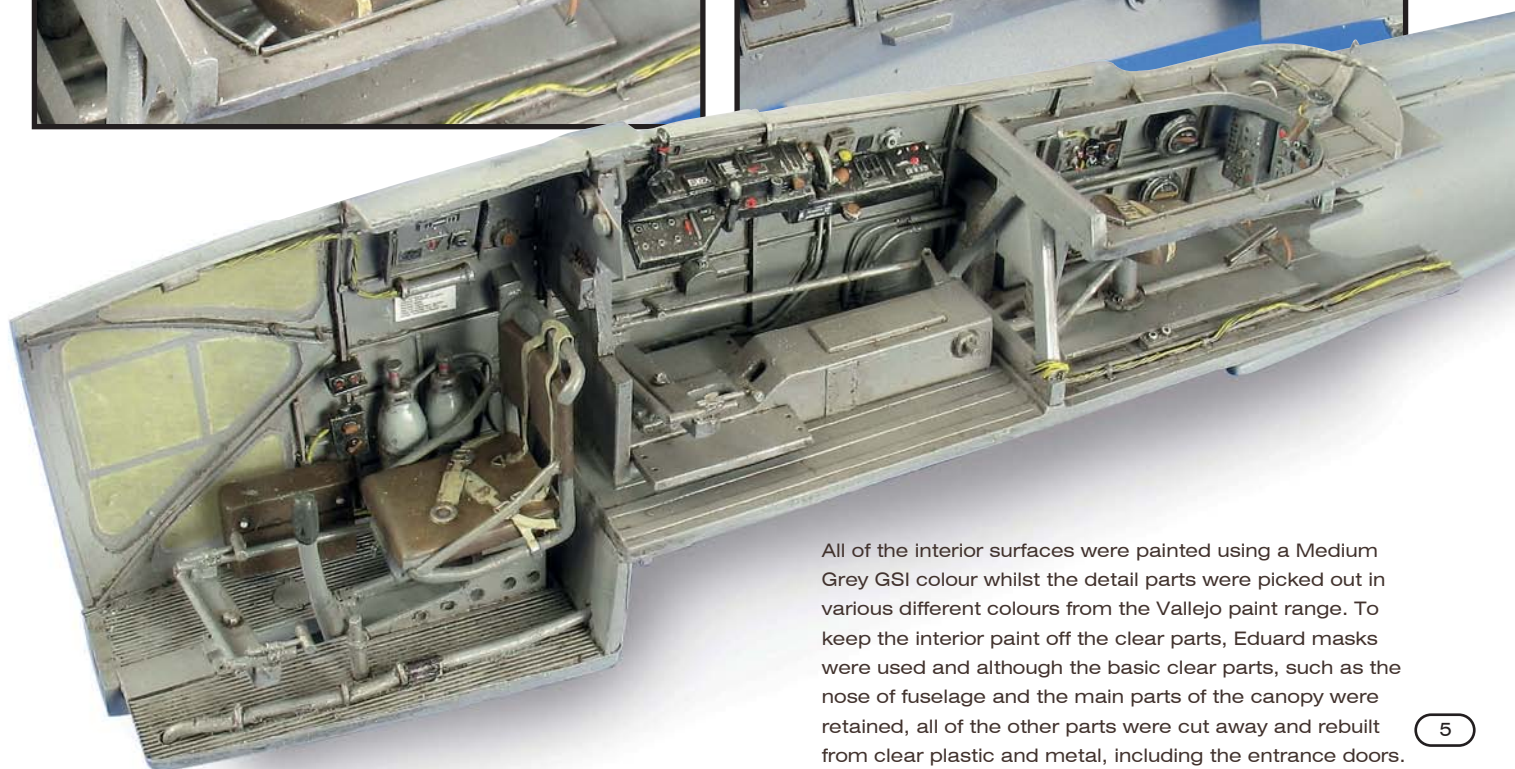
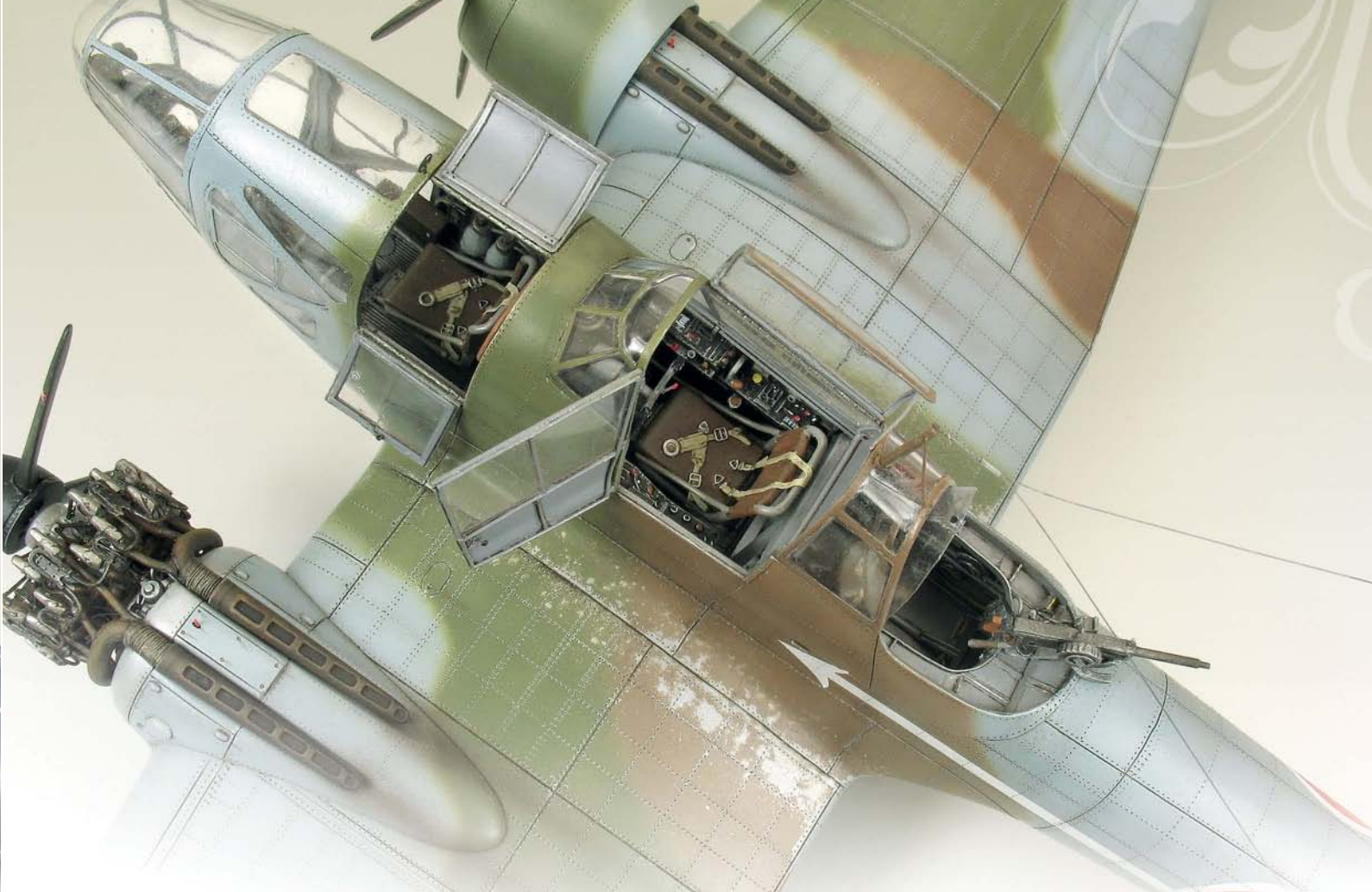
Like most modellers I started construction with the cockpit, including the extensively glazed nose of the aircraft. The clear parts for this nose are provided as separate left and right sections and these were attached to their relevant fuselage halves, resulting in two complete left and right fuselage sections. The nose parts are moulded from clear plastic are a great idea because it is easy to mask appropriate windows to achieve their very clear and simple presentation.



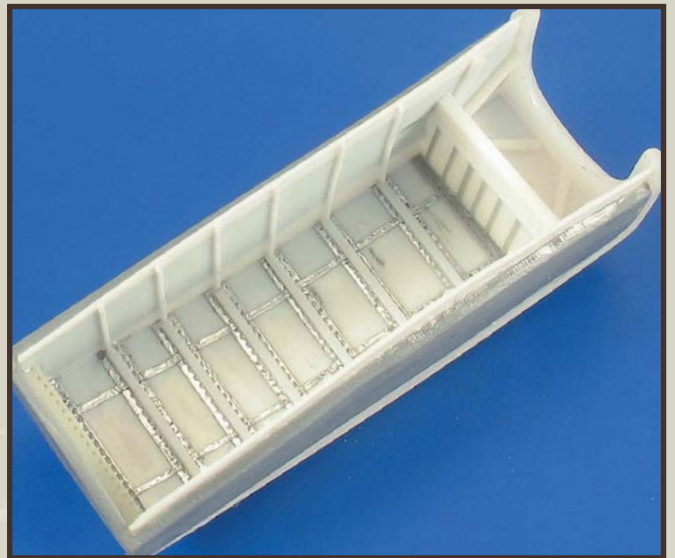
I recommend that the nose glazing is masked at this early stage, not only from the outside but from the inside too in order to protect it while spraying the glazing in the interior colour. Once the nose windows have been fitted to the fuselage some extra detailing was added to the interior using the photos in the Mushroom book as a guide to supplement the original kit parts with extra details made from plastic strip and fuse wire.



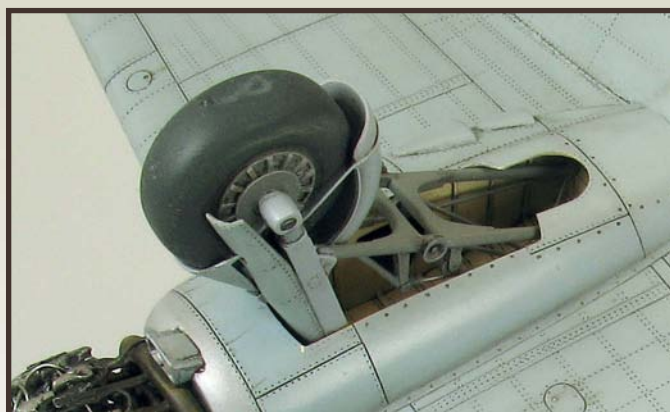
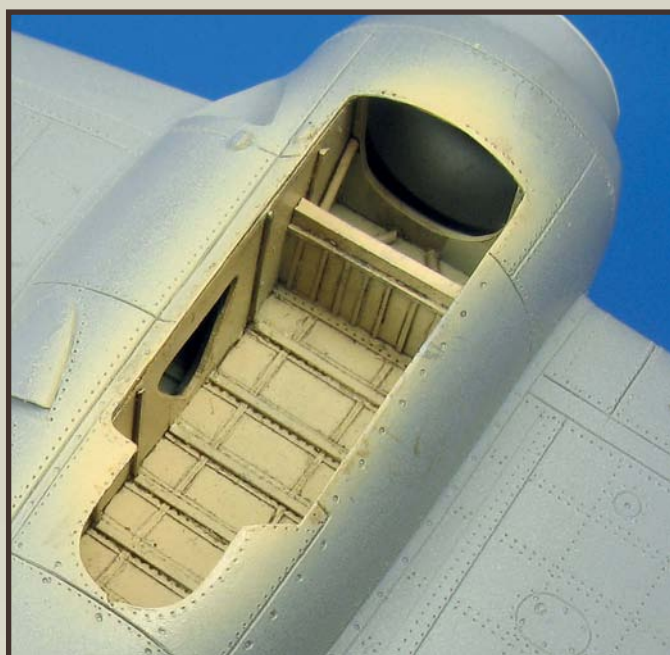
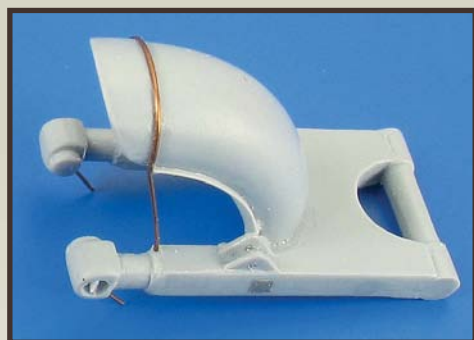
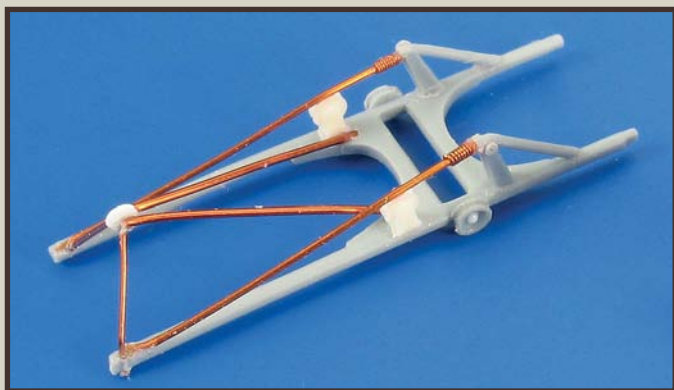
The plastic instrument panel was replaced using my own etched part which was prepared on my behalf by a professional PE producer using my own design. The defensive machine gun in the rear cockpit position was also given additional detail. Brass tube was used to make the gun barrel and small details were made from thin wires.



All of the interior surfaces were painted using a Medium Grey GSI colour whilst the detail parts were picked out in various different colours from the Vallejo paint range. To keep the interior paint off the clear parts, Eduard masks were used and although the basic clear parts, such as the nose of fuselage and the main parts of the canopy were retained, all of the other parts were cut away and rebuilt from clear plastic and metal, including the entrance doors.



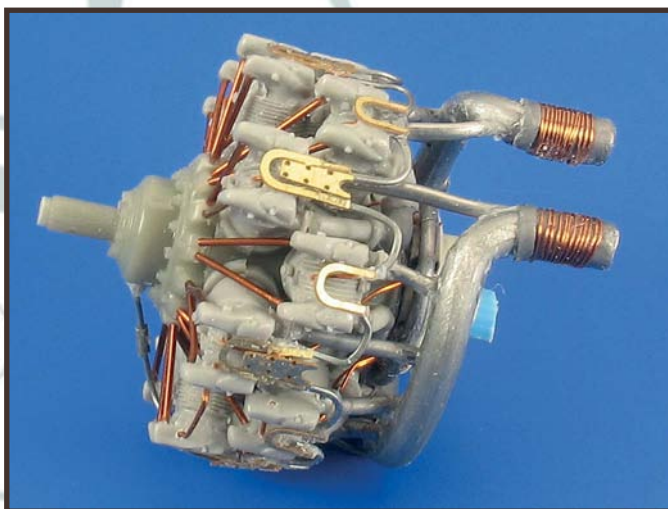
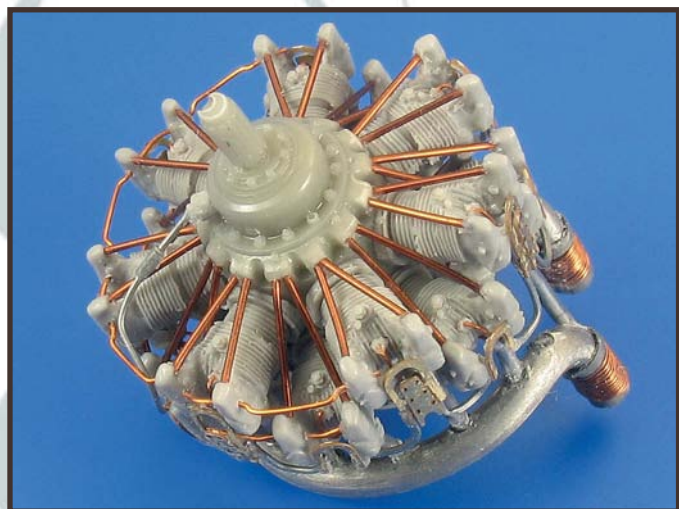
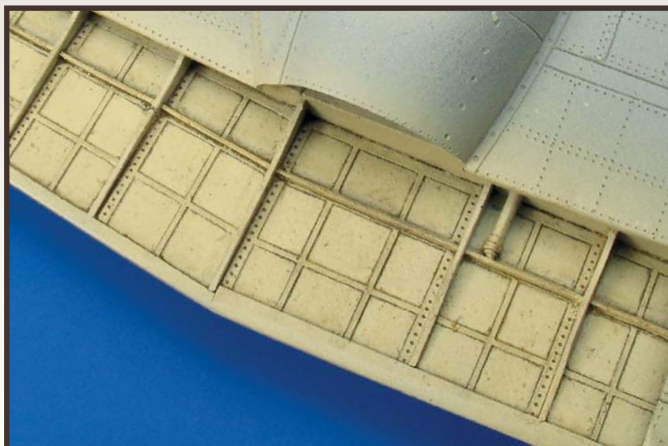
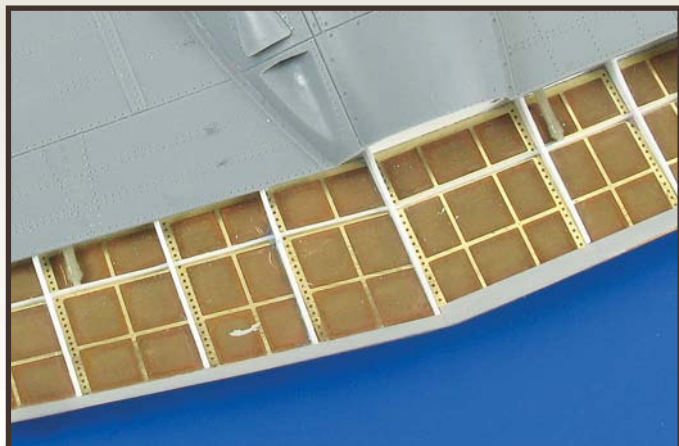
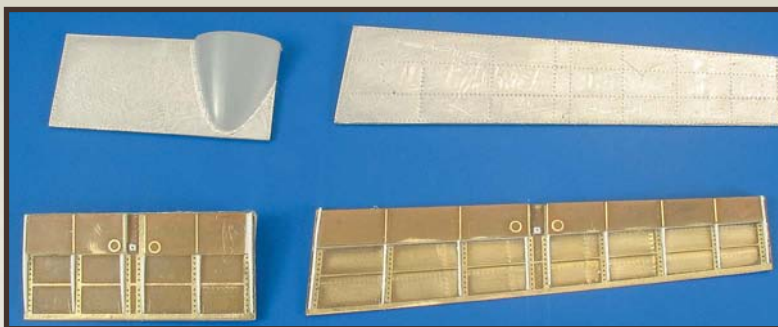
The wheel bays of this kit are very simplistic and also include the top of the recess for the wheel, which, according to the reference doesn't match with reality. In fact the top of the wheel bays should simply show the underneath of the metal skinning covering the top surface of the wing. To rectify this problem new wheel bays were made up using the side walls of the original bays as a basis to which were added numerous details. The complex wheel legs in the kit look very good and only require small adjustments, however I recommend that the undercarriage doors are thinned out, which I did from the inside.



The wheel bays were painted using the French interior colour Chamois, which corresponds quite accurately in tone to Gunze Mr Colour 318 Radome Tan. The landing gear legs were painted a dark grey colour and the wheel well doors are finished in the lower surface colour - Gris Bleu Clair. One thing worth mentioning at this point is the fact that the tail wheel bay on this kit needs to be opened up as it is incorrectly moulded closed.



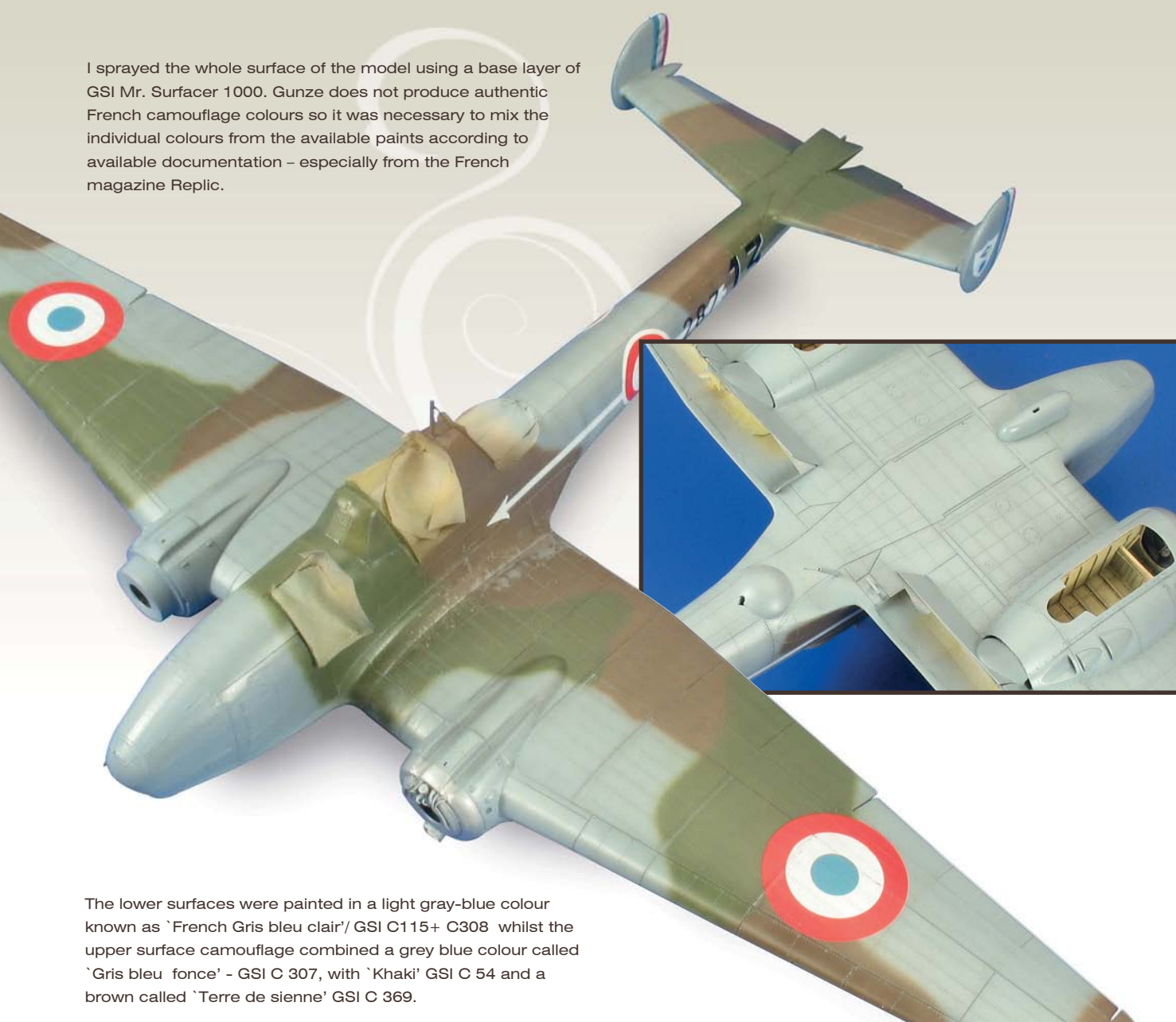
The opened wing flaps of this aircraft type were painted in the French interior colour Chamois and this certainly provides a colourful addition to the model. In order to detail the flaps, completely new moving parts were constructed from thin plastic material and PE parts which were part of the PE set that I had exclusively ordered to my own design. The inner wing construction was replicated using metal sheet, plastic plates and profiles. To add further interest and detail all of the control surfaces were separated, adjusted and fastened in a deflected position.



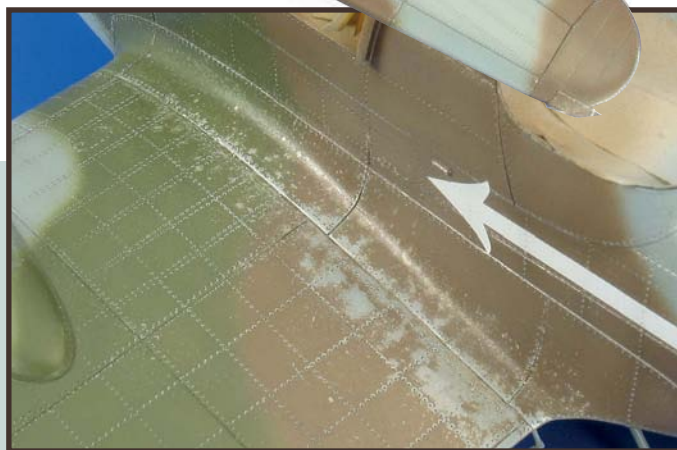
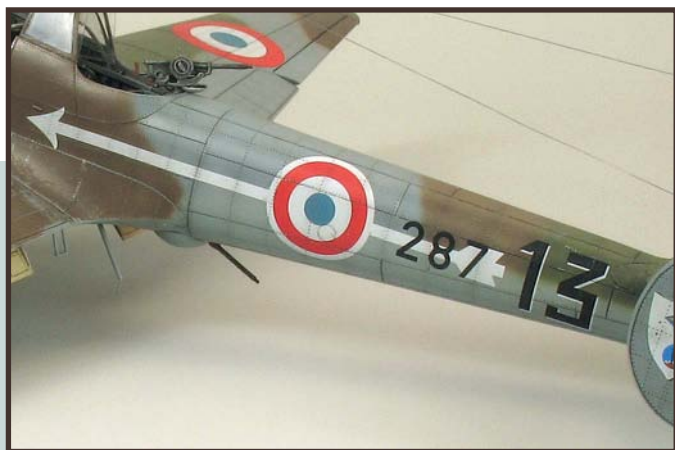
The kit engines were replaced using new resin Gnome-Rhone 14 M engines from the Russian company Vector and the quality of these additional parts is extremely high indeed, just requiring some extra wires to achieve perfect results. However the exhaust system had to be made completely from scratch using pewter wires of different diameters which was malleable enough to form into this relatively complex array of piping.



I sprayed the whole surface of the model using a base layer of GSI Mr. Surfacer 1000. Gunze does not produce authentic French camouflage colours so it was necessary to mix the individual colours from the available paints according to available documentation – especially from the French magazine Replic.



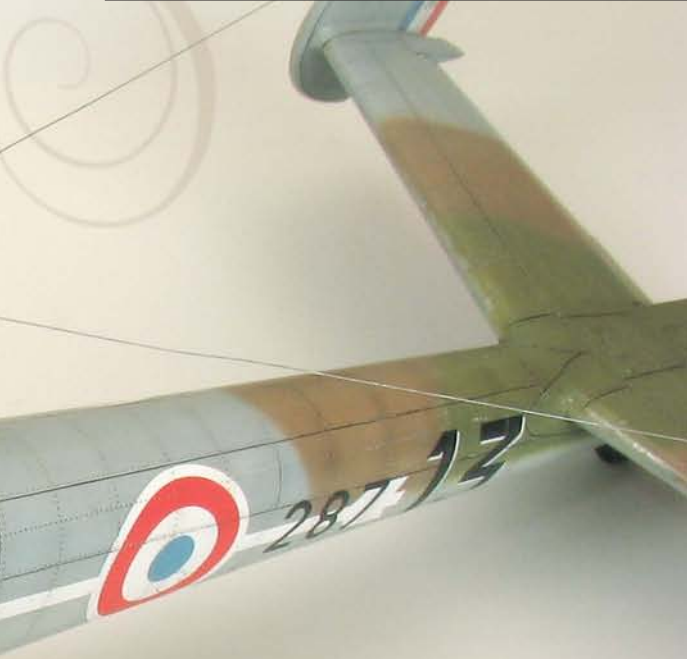
The lower surfaces were painted in a light gray-blue colour known as 'French Gris bleu clair' / GSI C115+ C308 whilst the upper surface camouflage combined a grey blue colour called 'Gris bleu fonce' - GSI C 307, with 'Khaki' GSI C 54 and a brown called 'Terre de sienne' GSI C 369.



After spraying the colour scheme it was time to add the decals and these came from Techmod which produces three decal sheets for this aircraft. Each of these Techmod decal sheets includes 4 optional markings and I used Techmod decal sheet No.48087 to decorate my model. The option that I chose from this sheet was an aircraft flown by GR II/14 at the end of 1940 and the Techmod decals were of high quality with good colour representation. These adhered perfectly to the surface using GSI Mr.Mark Setter and Mr.Mark Softer which made them literally 'soak' into the surface, including the small rivets to give a painted on appearance and a coat of clear gloss was used to seal the decals into place.

I almost forgot to mention that the decal sheet also provides a set of masks for the glazing and wheels and these were applied prior to painting the model. To weather the model and highlight the rivets and recessed panel lines a Dark and Neutral Wash from the MiG Production company was utilised and the various scratches associated with operational aircraft were applied gently with aluminium and grey colours. This particular aircraft, unlike most other aircraft of this type had an antenna mast mounted above the cockpit with wires leading to the two vertical tail surfaces and these antennae wires were replicated using thin nylon thread.





French aircraft, thanks to their attractive camouflage colours and impressive markings, are a significant part of any WW2 model collection and the Potez 63.11 should definitely be included amongst them.



CORSAIR II

TA-7H

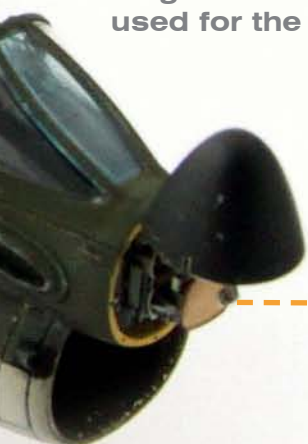


FRANCOIS REGIS - BINDER
1:72ND HOBBY BOSS



The Corsair II flew for the first time in 1965 and quickly had its baptism of fire. The two seat version, named TA-7 was produced for the US Navy and the Air National Guard for pilot instruction. This version was exported to several countries including Greece (TA-7H) and Portugal (TA-7P).

For this model, I used the Eduard set designed for the Hobby Boss kit which is comprised of two sheets (interior and exterior). I also retrieved Verlinden and Eduard pieces from an old Fujimi model (seat and radar). From this kit, I also took the air intake for its more accurate shape. Finally, an Aires set for the single seat version was used for the cockpit.

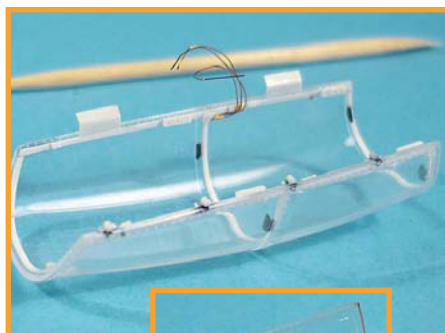
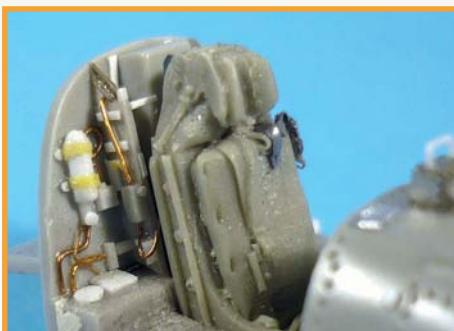


Cockpit

The cockpit is quite basic with some instruments and side consoles supplied as decals. As it remains very visible with its wide canopy, it is essential to increase the detail level. I started with a single seat cockpit from Aires which was duplicated and glued together. The rear part was deleted and I used the Hobby Boss parts instead. This allowed me to keep the TA-7 features and at the same time, to ease the insertion of the set in the fuselage. The two cockpits have been glued and any gaps filled with Milliput. Details on the side consoles were removed in order to be replaced with Eduard pre-coloured photoetched parts.

It should be noted that these parts whilst theoretically attractive were actually quite disappointing. Critically, Eduard has coloured all the parts as dark grey when they should be black. Secondly, the printing on my parts was blurred, so most of the parts had to be repainted. The overall finish also lacks any raised detail. This is why I added a few switches cut from plastic sheet with a 0.3mm propelling stencil. For the pilot's instrument panel, I used the Aires parts which are much more accurate. It should be noted that for the rear cockpit, a radar scope has to be added to the Eduard part. On the back walls, details are added such as cable, cases and the green

small cylinders on the side of each position. Seats are duplicated from Verlinden seats. They are improved with details such as specific headrests (enlarged fins for the front cockpit). The windshield is very good and can be easily fitted without any putty. On the other hand, the canopy has a moulding seam along the top that should be removed. For this, I used a scalpel blade passed along the canopy. Then, this area has been polished with Micromesh and Tamiya Compound. To finish, the canopy interior received frame made of Evergreen plastic card, handles and mirrors.

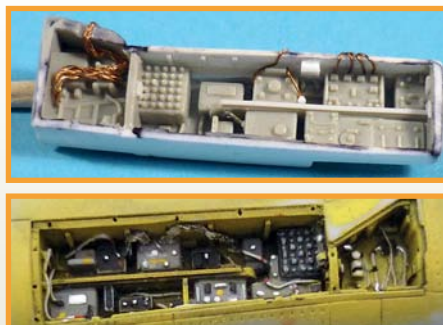
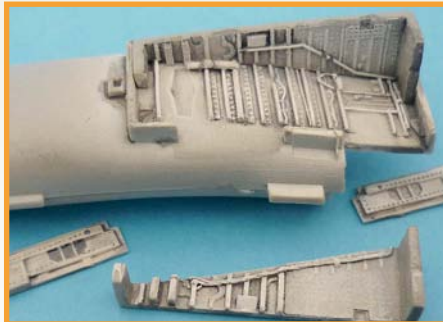
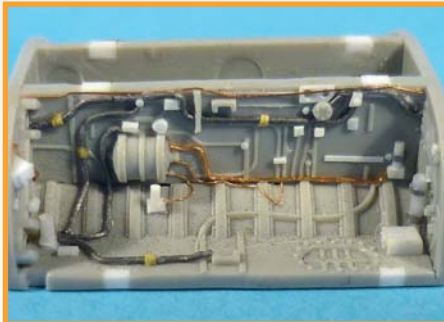
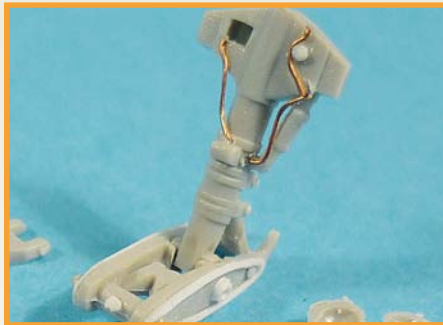
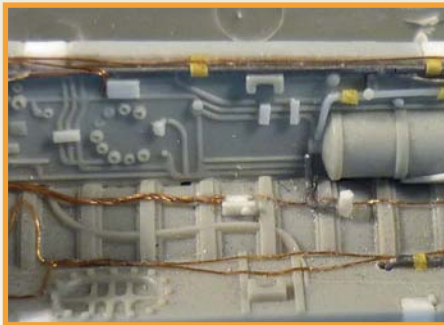


Radar

The radar made of resin and photoetched parts that comes from a Verlinden set. The main piece is detailed with plastic sheet and copper wire.

The nose is first cut and thinned with a spherical burr. Then hinge and structural reinforcements are added. The radar dish is a photoetched piece burnished into shape by rubbing it with a pen.





Main wheel bay

Main Wheel bay are particularly successful. Hobby Boss had provided many details on its insert. It is still possible, with good references, to enhance this area with additional cables and boxes. Be careful because wheel bays are not symmetrical and each has its own features. The bays received a Humbrol white coat followed by a matt varnish. A grey wash is applied in order to enhance all the details. Then a second coat of white is painted to soften the grey wash. Finally, raised detail and structures were picked out in pure white with a little brush.

Forward wheel bay

Again, Hobby Boss has paid attention to this area. I really liked the intelligent design with the bay moulded directly onto the air intake and separate walls. This greatly helps the detailing and the painting. For this area, Eduard offers a few parts, mostly uninteresting. Photoetched cables are not realistic but can be used as template for their replacements in copper wire.

Electronic bays and access doors

The model can be represented with open electronics bays as often seen in reality. All the bays are well detailed even if the moulding is a little soft. The main challenge will be to paint accurately. As all the boxes are moulded in one block, it is necessary to work with an extra fine brush. On the right side, I disassembled the bay to make the painting easier. In retrospect this was a bad idea because I had to redo most of the bay walls and the arrangement was complex. Looking back, there was probably no need to complicate things. I had in my possession the Verlinden parts for these areas but these are mostly inaccurate, so I chose not to use them. These compartments were painted in zinchromate yellow. Like the wheel bay, a grey wash was applied in order to enhance all the details. At this stage, it's time to use fine brushes and start the micro painting. In the left bay, do not forget to add the big oxygen bottle painted in green.

The compartment doors are nice especially on the interior face. For more realism, it is necessary to thin them by sanding the exterior side. Information placards, can be added on the inside.

Access panels for steps to the cockpit have been drilled and the steps replaced with plastic square strips.

Air intake

It is the main fault of this model because it is too flattened on its interior shape. This mistake is easily correctable if you have an old Fujimi Corsair. I simply cut the air intake lip and fixed it instead of the Hobby Boss one. The lip created was then filled with milliput. After drying for 24 hours, I sanded the area and redid the engraving around the air intake.



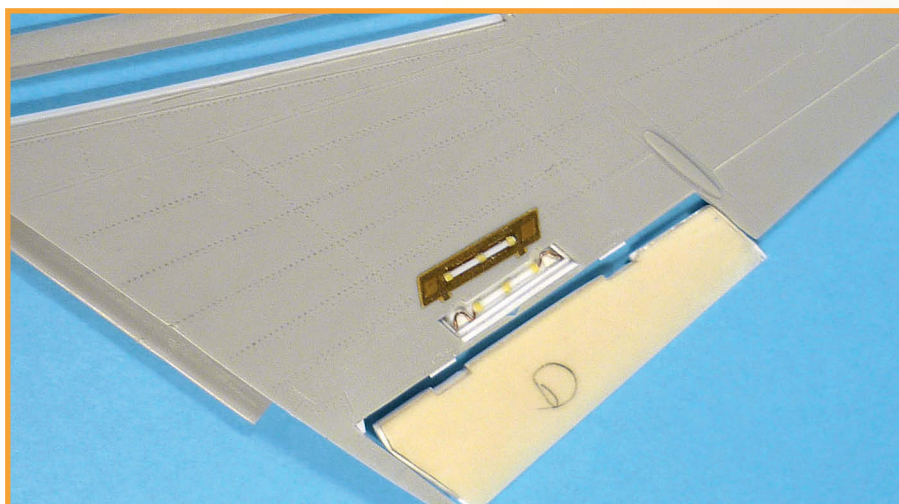
Refuelling probe

Hobby Boss offers a separate refuelling probe but unfortunately moulded within its housing, so I had to use my scalpel in order to cut out the probe. In this process, I only managed to save the front of the housing and the probe was not usable anymore, so I had to look for a substitute part. I found it in a Trumpeter F-100 kit. This new probe had the same diameter and a similar head. Only the shape and the length were changed.



Wings and flaps.

The wings are moulded with heavy riveting, which was filled with cyanoacrylate glue. The principle is to apply the glue along the line to filled, wait for a few minutes and then, with a scalpel blade remove the surplus, leaving the glue in the hole. The finishing is done with fine sandpaper. Be careful not to wait too long for the glue to dry, because it becomes hard very quickly, making the sanding much more difficult.



The rivets lines are redone more accurately with the Rosie the riveter tool. The flaps have been separated from the wing and are hollow on the internal faces. The fixed part of the wings received a plastic strip that allows repositioning the flaps down and shows the hinges. The little airbrakes on the underside and upper are represented open. For this, it is necessary to drill and refine the wings and create a slot with tiny hinges.



Auxiliary generator

The original piece is accurate but lacks sharpness, so I only kept a small part of this piece, added cables and remade the four bladed propeller. The bay also received reinforcements made of plastic in the interior.

Antennas and fairings

Hobby Boss have modelled a US Navy version (TA-7C), it is important to take into account features of the Greek version. There are two dorsal antennas: a black small one situated just behind the hood and a larger white one further behind. There is no need to put the fairing on the rear underside of the fuselage as indicated on the instructions, but do not forget the little fairing situated just behind the front wheel bay. This piece is supplied in the kit (but not used in the US version).

Regarding the parachute housing (which is characteristic of the TA-7H version), there is nothing given in the kit and it has to be scratchbuilt using 4.8 mm diameter Evergreen tube (cut through the centre). Missile tracks on the fuselage are improved with plastic sheet and Eduard parts.

Finally, little oversight from Hobby Boss: a drain has to be added on the left side of the fuselage.

Paint, Decals and Patina

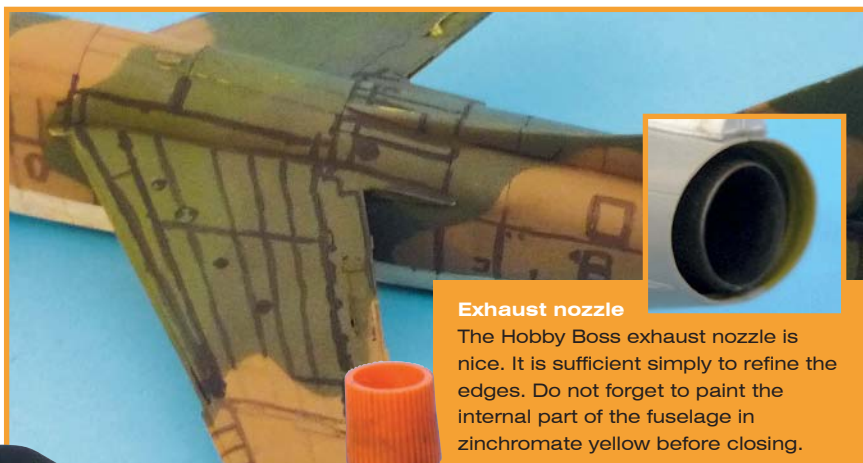
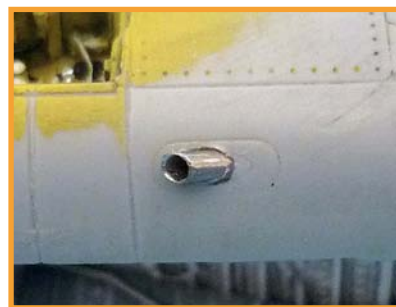
The main attraction of the Greek versions are the weathered finishes. Most pictures show very dirty planes with colours faded by the sun. After the masking of all the parts to be protected, the model received a yellow zinchromate coat which allows for the first time to check the surfaces and to correct any defects, and, this coat will also serve as an undercoat for the future patina on the most worn areas. I started the camouflage (Vietnam type) with a grey on the underside (Humbrol 28) then, the brown (Humbrol 118) and finally the two green (Humbrol 116 & 117).

The boundaries between the two layers are done with paper masks.

After 24 hours drying, I started the weathering with an anthracite Wash for the darker areas and light Brown for the rest.

Washes are made of Humbrol paint and thinner. Excess is removed with a tissue soaked with lighter fluid.

The model is randomly spotted with a masking product (Mr Masking Neo / Mr Hobby) in order to create darker areas. Then, the airframe received a coat of lightened base colours in the center of the panels with a DH2 Sparmax airbrush. The principle is to achieve a fine marbling.



Exhaust nozzle

The Hobby Boss exhaust nozzle is nice. It is sufficient simply to refine the edges. Do not forget to paint the internal part of the fuselage in zinchromate yellow before closing.



Panel and rivets lines received the same treatment but with darker base colours. In order to be more accurate you can use an adhesive paper sheet (Post-it), which allows you to make particularly fine lines. With a new scalpel blade a scuffing is made on the most worn areas revealing the yellow zinchromate undercoat.

Decals are set up. I used the superb Icarus sheet 72001 dedicated to Greek A-7 and TA-7. The quality of the decals is excellent and the application is very easy between two Future layers (Klir in France) A Humbrol matt coat is finally sprayed over the decals.



1:72ND HOBBY BOSS CORSAIR II TA-7H

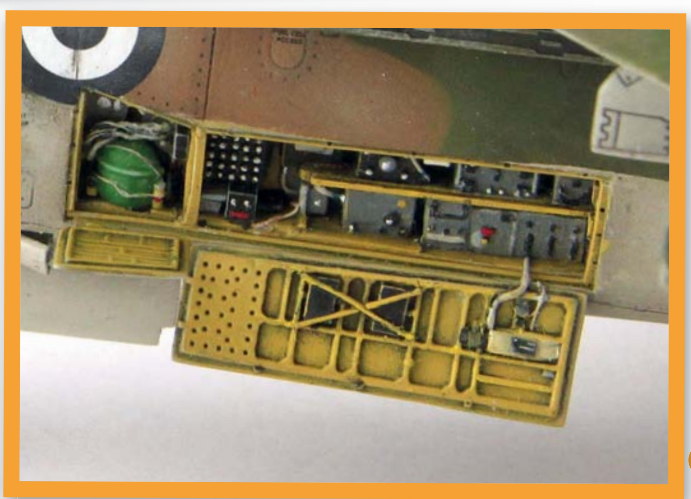


Conclusion

The last step is to fit all the small items without disaster! To finish, I created a small seagull in Milliput, which has landed on the top of the tail left its tell tail signature on the tail fin!

Bibliography

A-7D/K Corsair, Lock-On n°9, Verlinden Production
Walk Around 44, Squadron Signal.





SNOWBOUND

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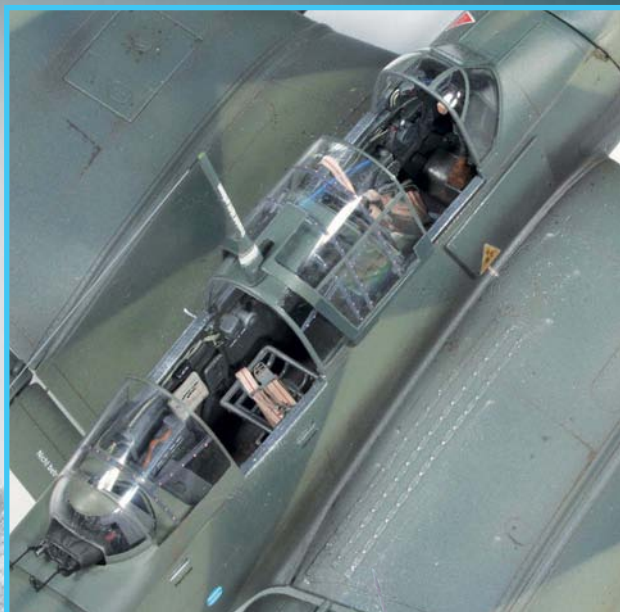
Stuka



HASEGAWA'S 1:32 JU 87 G-2

MODELLED BY

Luc Janssen



When I decided to build a Ju 87 G-2, I had in mind to make a heavily weathered winter- camouflaged tank hunter.

However, after checking different books and publications I was very attracted by the usual German 'every day' green – green camouflage with a lot of dirt marks and oil stains. To obtain a good contrast, I decided to make a green-green Ju 87 G-2 parked on a snow covered airstrip. I found many photographs of such scenes.

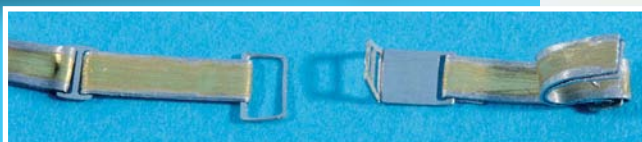
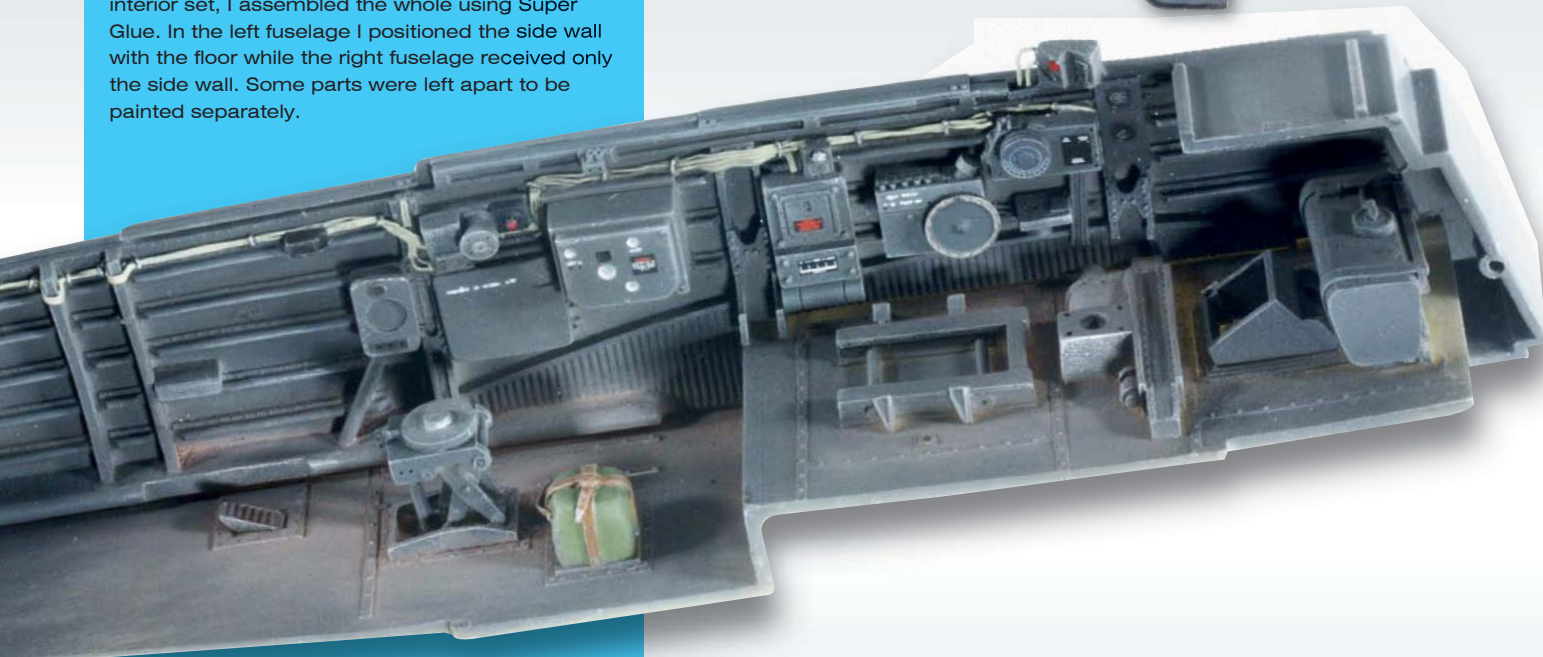
Building

Although the Hasegawa kit is beautiful and well detailed, I wanted to change some parts and I used following after- markets sets, namely:

Robert Schatton 37 mm gun barrels
Eduard Ju 87 G-2 Stuka Interior
Eduard Ju 87 D/G Stuka Cockpit Set
Voyagermodel Weighted wheels

Assembling the model is fairly easy as the parts fit together well and only a minor correction with putty is needed. The Eduard Cockpit Set is extremely well detailed, but rather difficult to install nicely. I went for a very good cleaning of the parts and different dry-fits of the whole cockpit interior to be sure of the correct construction and a perfect installation in the fuselage when closing.

Once convinced of the right fit of the parts of the interior set, I assembled the whole using Super Glue. In the left fuselage I positioned the side wall with the floor while the right fuselage received only the side wall. Some parts were left apart to be painted separately.



For the seat belts I wanted to use the Eduard set, but the general impression of these belts, although extremely well detailed, is too artificial! With lead foil from an old toothpaste tube I made new belts and formed more realistic poses. These new belts were hand painted, some decals were applied, coated with varnish and weathered.

As the Germans sometimes dismantled the wheel covers when mud build up could cause trouble, I decided to present an uncovered landing gear. Although I had bought an after -market set of gear forks from Master Casters, they did not impress me and I went for scratch building! With thick sprue I made rough U-shaped forms using the kitchen oven and gravity force! The sprue was placed on a rod with the right diameter and put in the oven. When the sprue began to weaken and bend nicely over the rod, I opened the oven to stop the warming up and I obtained the basic form. With lots of sanding (and lots of patience) I succeeded in making good looking gear forks on which I added the necessary details.



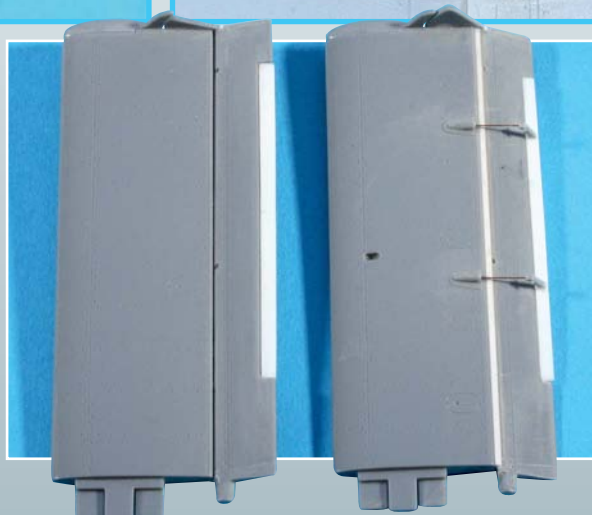
The gun pods from the kit need further detailing as well, thus I added some small bits and pieces and wiring. The holes in the attachment brackets were drilled out and the brass 37 mm barrels dry fitted to be sure the finished pods would have the correct look once painted and installed under the wings.

For the landing light I used a small piece of Acrylic that I prepared to fit precisely in the existing recess in the wing leading edge. The back and the sides of this piece were then sanded and highly polished and glued in the recess. Once the glue had hardened, I formed the correct look of the landing light cover by sanding and polishing the Acrylic. The navigation lights, which are not provided in the kit, were made from the shafts of old coloured tooth brush.



To give the model a more dynamic look, I changed the angle of the elevators in the upward position. The separation of the elevators and the mass balances was done with a dental tool with very sharp point. By repeatedly running the point of this needle-shaped tool over the joints, the parts come loose without problems and with sharp edges. The elevator trims now also had to be adapted and I made new ones from sheet styrene. The kit trim actuators were partly replaced by stretched copper wire.

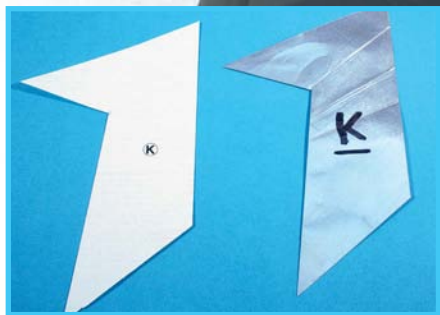
As the kit actuators of the flaps and ailerons are on the heavy side, I replaced them by pins. At the top of the tail I added the attachment point for the wire antenna.



Painting

Reference pictures of Stukas show different ways of applying the camouflage colours although, knowing the 'Deutsche Gründlichkeit', the pattern is always the same. Some photos show neat lines between the colours, both between Dark Green (RLM 71) and Black Green (RLM 70) upperside and the Light Blue (RLM 65) underside while other photos show sprayed paints limits with a 'misty transition' as well between the upper side colours as between the upper- and underside colours. I decided to go for the 'misty transition' upperside with a sharp line with the Light Blue underside. I do not paint models using the 'pre-shading system' but prefer to give colour tone effects with pastels. I started to give the model a coat of Dark Green (RLM 71) on the complete upper surfaces.

Using the camouflage pattern printed on the building instructions of the kit, I cut out the Dark Green parts of the pattern on aluminium foil, creating masks. Then, using the tape used to apply mirrors to walls or cupboards, I put these aluminium masks on the model (as the 'mirror-tape' is very adhesive, it always has to be applied on Tamiya tape before to be put on the model itself). This way, a small gap is created between the surface to be painted and the mask and a nice and constant separation is obtained between the colours. The masks in place, I sprayed the Black Green (RLM 70) with low pressure (0.5 bar), carefully keeping the airbrush vertically on the edges of the aluminium covers.



The next step were the Light Blue (RLM 65) undersides of the model. After masking the painted Dark and Black Green upper sides with Tamiya tape, the Light Blue was sprayed with a sharp demarcation line as result. I painted the gun pods following the same working method. The main- and tail landing gear were coated with Green-Grey (RLM 02). I sprayed the complete model and the loose individual parts with a first coat of Gloss varnish (1 part Varnish – 1.5 parts of thinner) and, after thorough drying, a second coat (1 part Varnish – 3 parts thinner) was applied.



After the decaling and first weathering I gave the model another 2 coats of a mixture of Dull and Gloss Varnish, the first coat consisting in 2 parts Varnish (5 parts Dull + 1.5 parts Gloss) with 3 parts thinner and the second coat in 1 part of the same mixture and 2 parts of thinner. The visible parts of the interiors of the model were painted Black Grey (RLM 66) and dry brushed with a mixture of Grey and White oil paint. To finish the paint job of the interior, the Eduard Stuka interior photo edge set with many dials and placards is very attractive, but in fact too detailed and very fragile. I used only a limited number of these dials and placards and hand painted the majority of the visible details. The complete interior was coated with a mixture of varnish (5 parts Dull + 2 parts Gloss) and the paint- chipping effects in the cockpit were created with Aluminium, applied with a small brush and a small sponge.



I used the decal set of EagleCals Ju 87 G Stuka and applied the decals following the proven Micro Set & Micro Sol system. To avoid any silvering of the decals, I kept puncturing the decals with a needle while putting Micro Sol over and over again until the results were perfect and no silvering could be seen. To loosen the decals, I always use hot water instead of luke warm water, as indicated on the decal instructions.



For the weathering of a model, I use my own system which consists of 2 steps, the first on the glossy coat of Varnish and the second on a lightly shiny finishing coat of Varnish. With pastel powder sticks you can buy in every shop for drawing materials, I make pastel powder sanding the bars on sanding paper glued on a thicker piece of sheet styrene.

Depending on the colours of the model, I use darker or lighter tones. For the upper sides of this model, I used a mixture of Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna and Yellow and another mixture of Burnt Umber, Grey and Black. The undersides were treated with a mixture of Blue and Grey. Working with pastels on a glossy surface has the big advantage that, even with intense weathering, the surface is not affected too heavily and 'overdone' can be corrected by cleaning with a wet cloth.

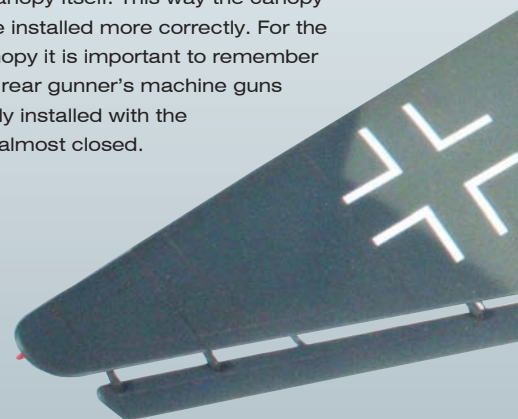
The panel lines were accentuated with Dark Brown and Black colour pencils, still on the glossy surfaces. On the places where the aircraft is boarded or serviced, some dirt or oil patches were simulated.

Once the first weathering is completed and the basic look of the almost finished model seems good, the earlier mentioned finishing coats of varnish (5 parts Gloss + 1.5 part Dull) are sprayed over the entire model. On the final coat a second weathering was done (more carefully than the first one) this time with Dark Brown and Black pastel powder. The heavy exhausts strains and other less pronounced airflow strains were simulated and some dirt and mud patches on the inner sides of the wings were created as well.



Final Touches

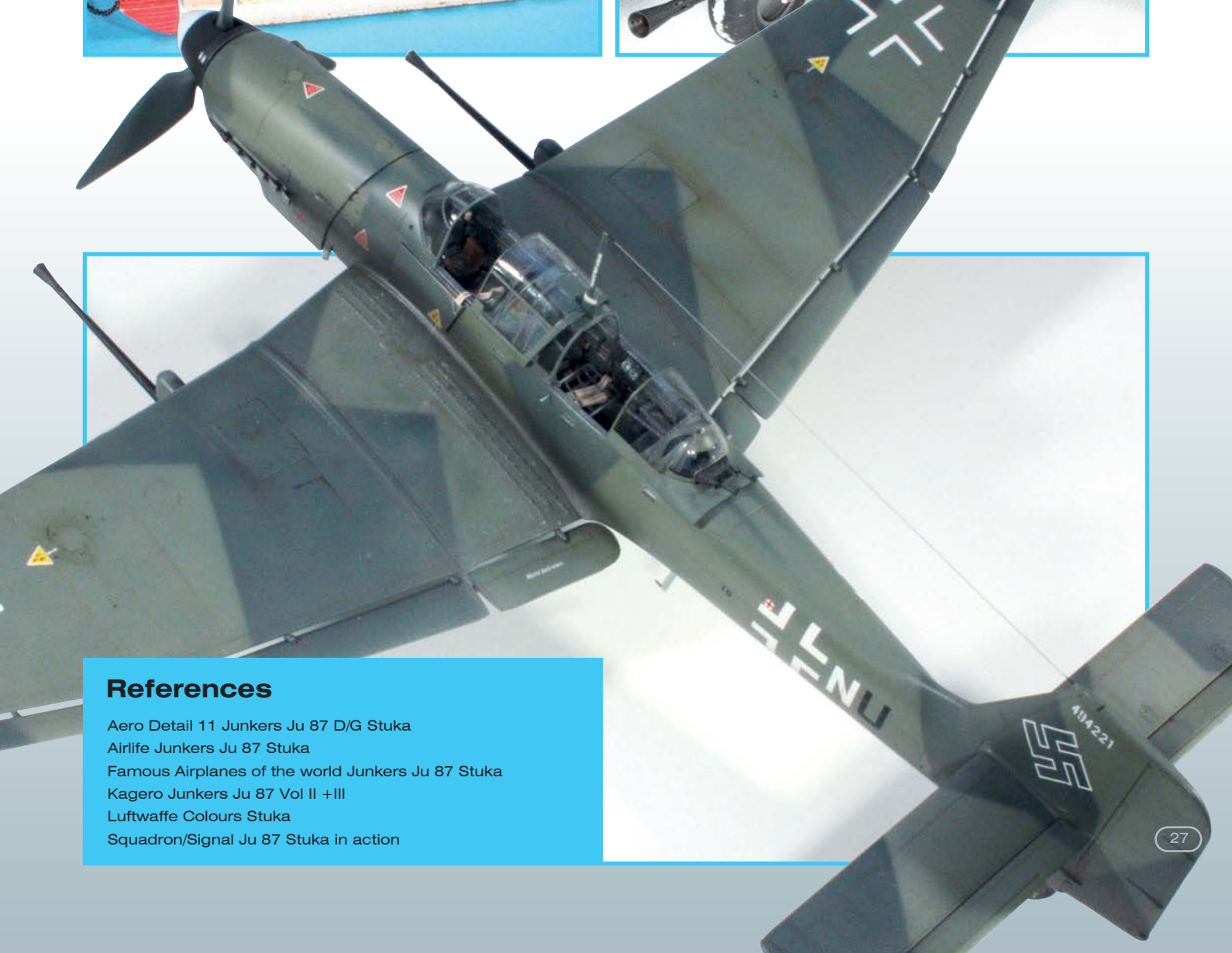
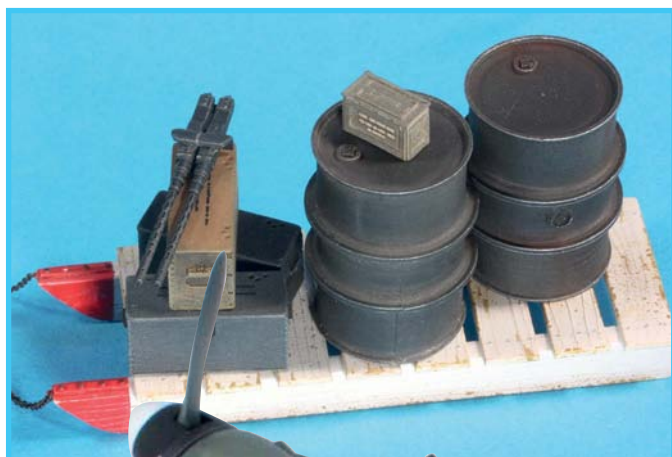
All details as antenna, pitot tube, boarding steps, gun pods, wheels, flap- and aileron balances, etc. were put in place. I came to the terrible realisation that the forward canopy did not fit over the glazed rear part behind it! On the internet I checked other already completed Hasegawa models and noticed that other model builders have encountered the same problem as most forward canopies are closed. The few open canopies to be seen indeed show a gap between the canopy and the fuselage. To solve this problem, I constructed the sliding slots for the forward canopy and added sliding pins to the canopy itself. This way the canopy could be installed more correctly. For the rear canopy it is important to remember that the rear gunner's machine guns were only installed with the canopy almost closed.



The Base

Simulating a snow covered base was fairly simple. With a broad brush I applied a thick coat of satin White paint on a piece of uneven vinyl carpeting. The paint still wet, I abundantly scattered icing sugar over the surface and created some tire tracks by rolling 2 wheels, attached together respecting the same distance of the wheels of the model, over the thick layer of paint and icing sugar. Once completely dry, the excess of icing sugar was simply wiped away with a brush.

I weathered the snow covered base with some light pastels and constructed an 'in the field made' sledge, painted and weathered it and loaded it with 2 barrels, some cases and the MG's of the rear gunner. Now the Stuka and the sledge were placed on the base, et voilà . . . my Hasegawa Ju 87 G - 2 was finished!



References

Aero Detail 11 Junkers Ju 87 D/G Stuka
Airlife Junkers Ju 87 Stuka
Famous Airplanes of the world Junkers Ju 87 Stuka
Kagero Junkers Ju 87 Vol II +III
Luftwaffe Colours Stuka
Squadron/Signal Ju 87 Stuka in action

**GREAT WALL HOBBY'S NEW 1:48 P-61A
KIT MODELLED BY FRANCK OUDIN**

Black Widow

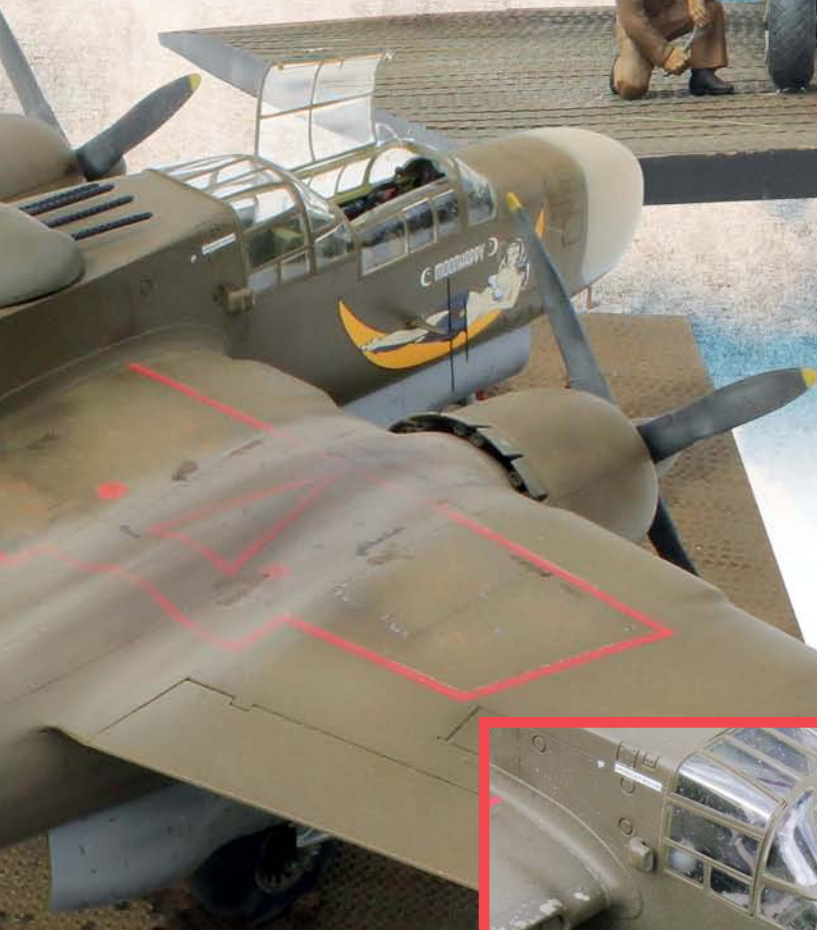


Great Wall Hobby is a new player on the modelling market, with the release of this P-61 Black Widow it will easily replace the old Monogram kit of the 70s, superbly moulded in grey styrene with crisp details, superb clear parts, a photo etched fret and a decal sheet for two aircraft based in the ETO.





Naturally as soon the kit was released a lot of critics appeared on many different internet forums concerning some areas of the P-61, which to me are fine and have been corrected since, this proves that GWH is a reactive company. So let's see what's in the box and how well it goes together....

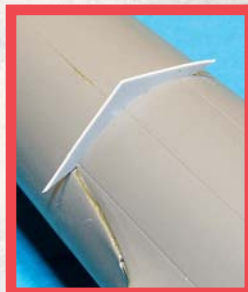
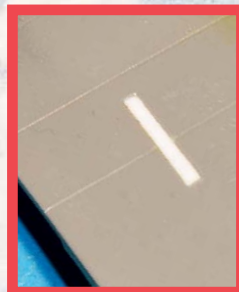
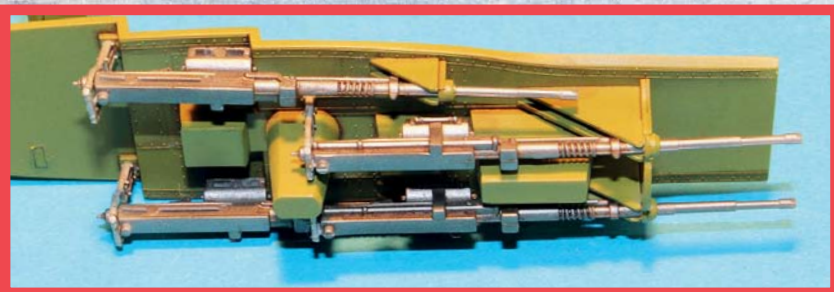
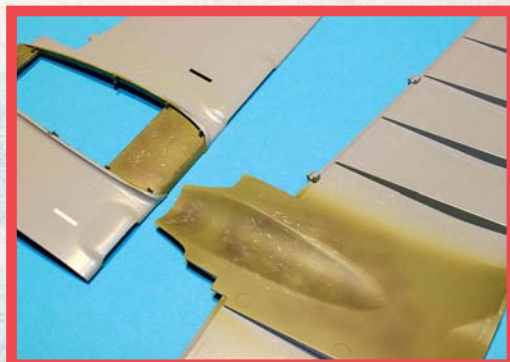
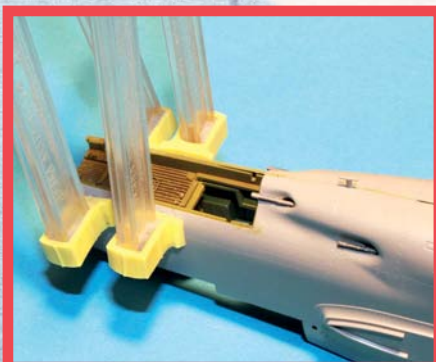
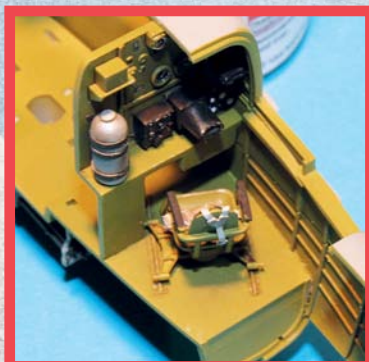


BUILDING

Interior-Fuselage

Nothing is missing from the comprehensive interior, with some great details such as the seat with PE seat belts, all the radio instruments, access ladder from the front to rear of the plane, the complete inside is painted with Gunze H-58 and Gunze-2. For all the surrounding details a light wash is applied, to give depth to the detail. The four machine guns are prepared and painted at this stage, the front landing gear should be added at this stage but will be put aside to simplify the painting later on. Once all is glued inside we can close the fuselage, but be careful as the four canons have to slide inside the four holes under the belly of the aircraft so extra care is required for this operation, the access doors can be left open but I decided to close them to not break the lines of the plane, same for the rear access door, a small plastic stripe will fill

the gap between these doors. Don't forget to glue the rear widow from the inside, and so far the fit is really good! The bulkhead and the radar are prepared, painted and glued in place depending on the version that you will model the radar will disappear under a coat of paint, but the aircraft that I choose will show the inside, the radar is glued a little angled to give a little life. The clear parts are prepared and glued in place, then I noticed a small step on the front windshield and the rear also, nothing really to worry about, but does need to be corrected, so I glued a small plastic strip and gently sanded it to shape until I was satisfied, do protect the clear while you are doing this operation, as you can easily scratch the canopy. The glass nose is glued, and does not need special care as the parts fit very well.



Wings

Beside a nice clean up, and gluing the parts together with the flaps, there's nothing much to do here, just make sure to plug the holes for the external tanks (if you don't want to use them) there are four holes, so choose the combination you want to do with the inside or outside engines as the plane was flown with both configurations. The PE air brake can be glued in the open or closed position, I choose the closed which look better to me, and less fragile when painting.

The booms

Again, not much work on this area as the fit is really good, the wheel well is painted Gunze H-58, washed and weathered, then the boom can be closed with the wheel well inserted. To avoid a 'tail-sitter' I inserted some lead between the wheel well and the engine and set them into PVA glue. The moving surface can be assembled at this stage, same for the central aileron.

Assembly

All the elements are now ready to be put together to give the shape to this great aircraft. First I glued the respective boom and wing, some touch up has to be done with some Mr Surfacer 1200 to obtain a perfect fit, once done on both sides the assembly can start. I glued one of the wings to the central fuselage, let it dry properly (as there is not a locating post) the wing is just positioned and glued, the same operation is done on the other side, finally the central aileron can be put in place, again some touch ups are done with Surfacer 1200, but nothing serious, the general fit is just perfect.



Engines

One of the main criticisms of this kit is the small opening of the engine cowling, so I replace these parts with True Details set Ref. 48547 which also contains the crankcase, two set of Curtiss electric propellers blades, two spinners and two set of distributors. The difficulty with this set is to remove the resin plug from the cowling, I utilised a lathe at my workplace to gently remove the resin excess. I also reworked the plastic part in order to adapt the crankcase and the spinner.

With all the parts ready, the painting process is done with Aluminium for the cylinder, Gunze H-339 for the crankcase and steel colour for the exhausts.

The blades are painted at this stage too; the complete engine is built and weathered, then put aside before the painting stage.

Details

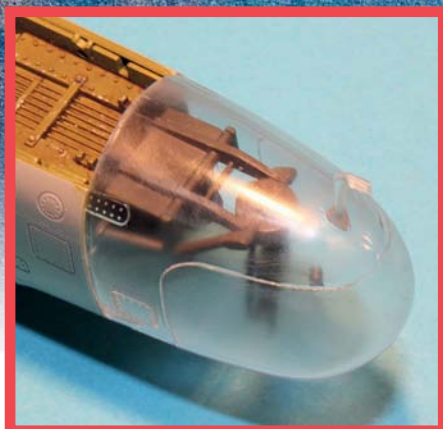
All the details are prepared, painted and gloss varnished such as the landing gear, gear doors, wheels, top turret and machine guns. In the first P-61 release from GWH, the top turret is not included in the kit, so I managed to get the turret from an old Monogram kit and change the machine guns barrels with the sumptuous 'Master' (from Poland) brass barrels, the look and precision of these parts are just superb. All parts put aside the model is now ready to be painted.

Below True Details set ref 48547 which contains the crankcase two set of Curtiss electric propellers blades, two spinner and two set of distributors



Right To turn the nose wheel the front strut was cut and a section of metal rod inserted.





PAINTING

This operation is fairly straightforward, as the choice of finish is either overall black or the Olive drab/Neutral grey. If you really enjoy your painting and weathering the olive drab is the way to go, for the leading edge of the wings, I sprayed a coat of Alclad airframe aluminium first, and then with a piece of foam and Mr Neo masking applied some dots here and there. Then the painting can start, a nice layer of Gunze H-53 is applied on the bottom wings, booms and central fuselage, after a good 24 hours drying session, the Olive Drab Gunze H-53 is applied free-hand. Once thoroughly

dry the plane is polished with a soft cloth and gloss varnished with Gunze H-30, then the decals can be applied. I chose an aircraft from the 6th NFS based in Saipan in late 1944, called "Moon Happy" with a superb nose art, the decals are from a new decal sheet produced by Squadron/Superscale ref MS481259, printed by Cartograf they settle very well on the model. Once dry all the water stains are removed and another gloss coat is applied to seal the decals.



Weathering:

Weathering such a subject like this is just pure pleasure as these planes were exposed to really harsh conditions with the sun and tropical weather, humidity and sea salt air, so as usual a mix of colours very diluted is applied on different patches randomly with different shades of light grey to sand yellow, just use your imagination and always look at pictures of the real aircraft. Some stains of oil and fuel are applied with a oil wash and diluted ink with a small brush. Finally, scuff marks are applied with silver pencil and some dust applied with acrylic colours and a small piece of foam achieving a natural effect.



Final touches:

All the remaining details are added to the model, landing gear, landing gear doors antennas, top turret etc...

A 0.05mm antenna wire is glued in place and finally the top canopy is placed to complete the model.

Conclusions:

Being for me the first model from GWH that I have built, I was really pleasantly surprised by the excellent general quality of the complete package and the general look of the model. Once complete the model is big and does give an excellent replica of this aircraft which didn't leave its mark in the history of aviation as it only flew for no more than two years, but surely should have a place in every collection of USAF modellers.

This model has been corrected in a few places since its initial release, a second boxing appeared on the market. Some aftermarket products will soon be available for this kit.

So if you fancy building this big beast I can only encourage you to do so, you will not be disappointed.

Special thank you to Squadron for providing me the resin set for the engine cowlings and the decals sheet, Master from Poland for the superb machine guns barrels, and as always, Bob Brown from MDC for all the Gunze products used to build and paint this model.

References:

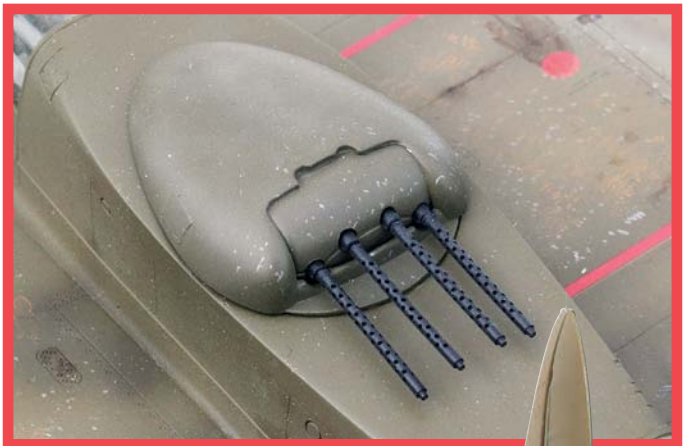
Squadron: resin set
TD48548

decals MS481259

Master from Poland:
AM-48001

Gunze:

H-52 Olive Drab
H-53 Neutral Grey
H-58 Interior Green
H-339 Engine Grey
H-77 Tyres black
H-406 RLM04 Yellow
H-2 Black





HASEGAWA
1:48

Modelled by **MACIEK ZYWCHYK**





F6F-3 HELLCAT

One of the most famous fighter planes of World War 2 was without doubt the Grumman F6F Hellcat. A great design, history and a wealth of painting options make it a very popular subject for modellers. Once I had seen pictures of Hellcat in standard three colour US Navy camouflage with a beautiful mouth and blood-shot eyes painted on the engine cover, I immediately made the decision to build a replica. Of course, realization of this idea came much later.



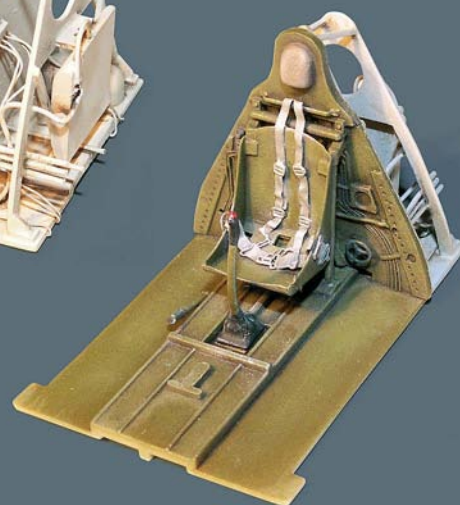
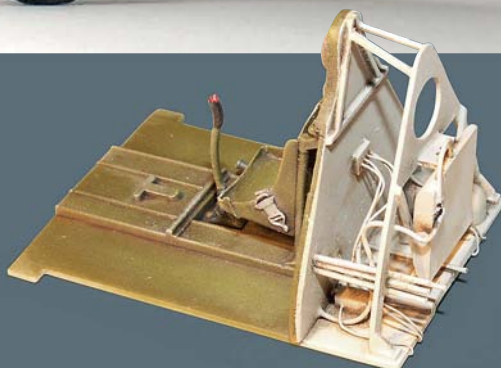
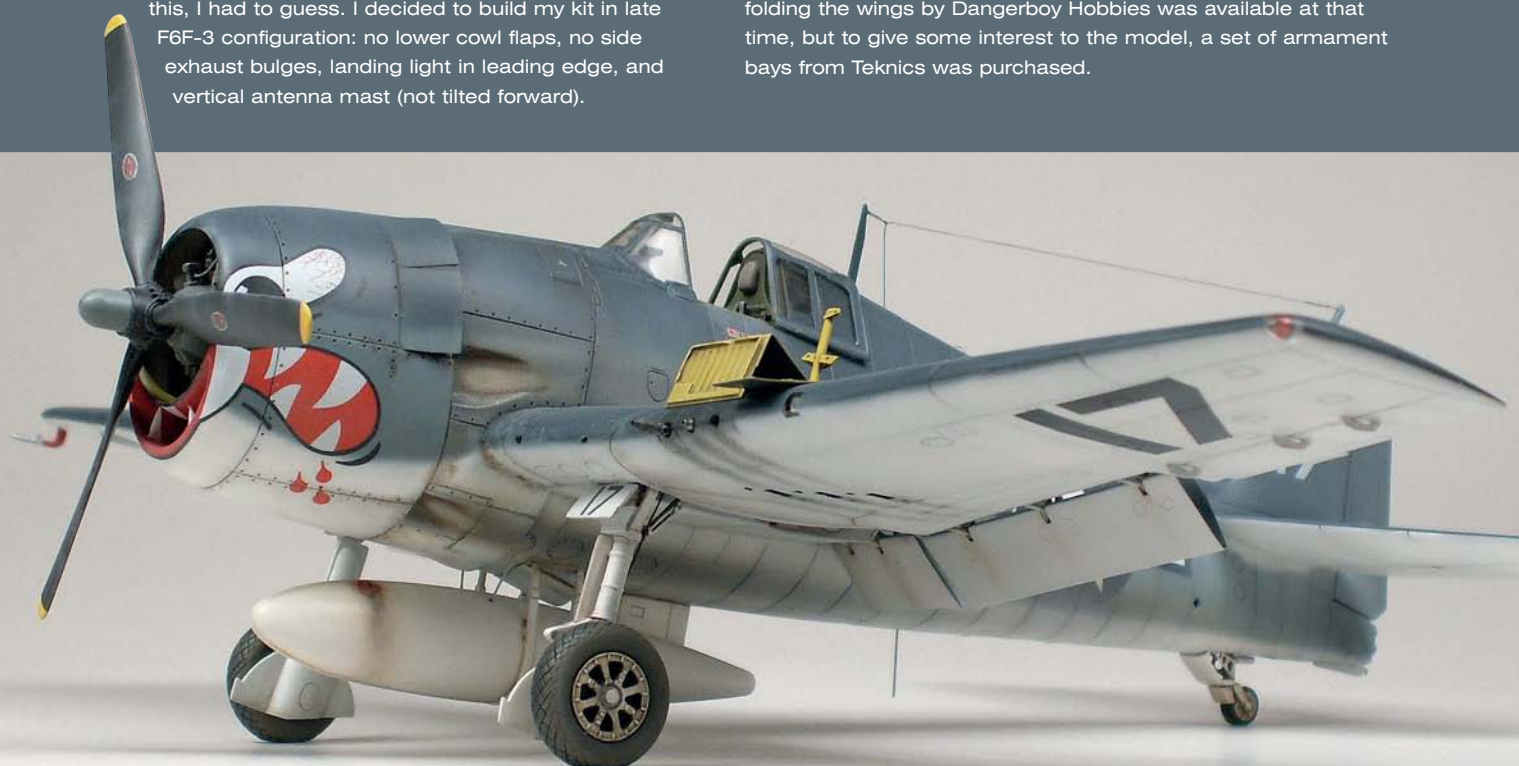
The paint scheme that caught my attention was used by VF-27 on several planes. Some of them carried three colour camouflage and others later in the overall Sea Gloss Blue scheme. Despite searching the Internet and many publications about the Hellcat, I could find only one photograph of the subject, showing only the engine cover. There are many illustrations in various publications, depicting mostly the machine with the number "17", which was flown by one of the aces - Richard Stambok. Unfortunately they also show many differences, so the exact configuration and details of paint scheme are very hard to determine. Eventually I decided finally to rely on the versions in the Kagero publication. The plane I was interested in was F6F-3, but during the production lot of small design changes were introduced. The differences are clearly explained in Kagero's "Aero Detail" publication, but they are based on serial numbers. Since I was unable to determine

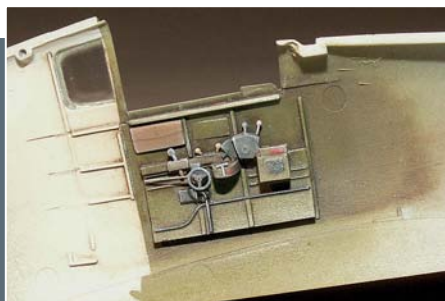
this, I had to guess. I decided to build my kit in late F6F-3 configuration: no lower cowl flaps, no side exhaust bulges, landing light in leading edge, and vertical antenna mast (not tilted forward).

The Kit

This model was built some years ago, at that time there were several Hellcat kits in my favourite 1:48 scale. The best choice in my opinion was Hasegawa. It's very good model, but not without problems. The Landing gear bays of original aircraft are rather complex, so reproduction with injection moulds is difficult, but the extreme degree of simplification here is not acceptable. I couldn't find any aftermarket sets, so this area had to be detailed from scratch. Shortly after my kit was finished, two new sets were introduced: Eduard photoetch and Aires resin. Both enable you to make new correctly detailed gear bays. Too late for me, as I don't plan to make another Hellcat!

I have built a Grumman Avenger with folded wings, but the result was not very eye-catching. The outline of a plane is not recognizable with the whole fuselage is hidden by the wings. That's why I didn't incorporate this feature although a great set for folding the wings by Dangerboy Hobbies was available at that time, but to give some interest to the model, a set of armament bays from Teknics was purchased.





Fuselage

The cockpit from box is not bad, but because I managed to get an out of production Aires resin set, I used it. I combined the resin parts with the details from the Eduard etched set. Because this version of Hellcat had windows behind cockpit, I decided to detail up the area behind pilot's seat. It was done with scratchbuilt plastic parts and some wire. The tail wheel bay was detailed the same way. Not long after my build was finished new, much better (with the area visible through side windows) cockpit set, was released by Aires.



HELLCAT

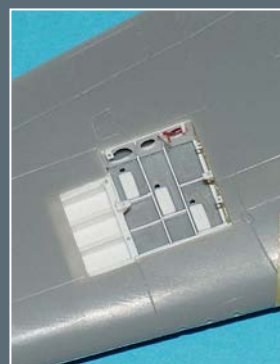
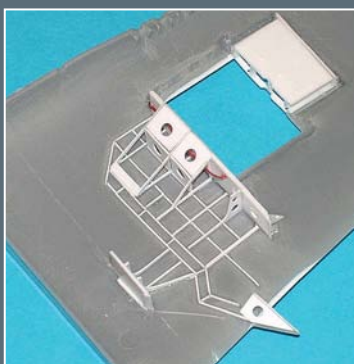
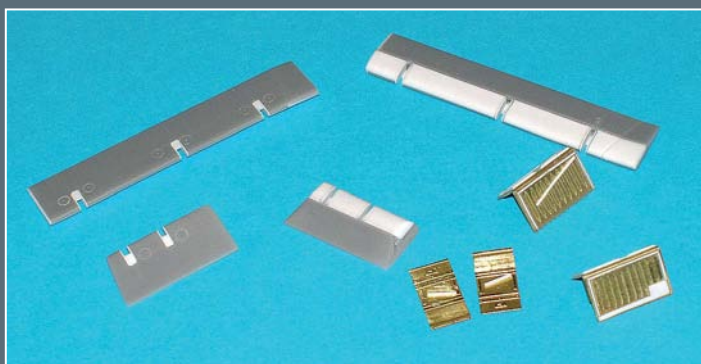
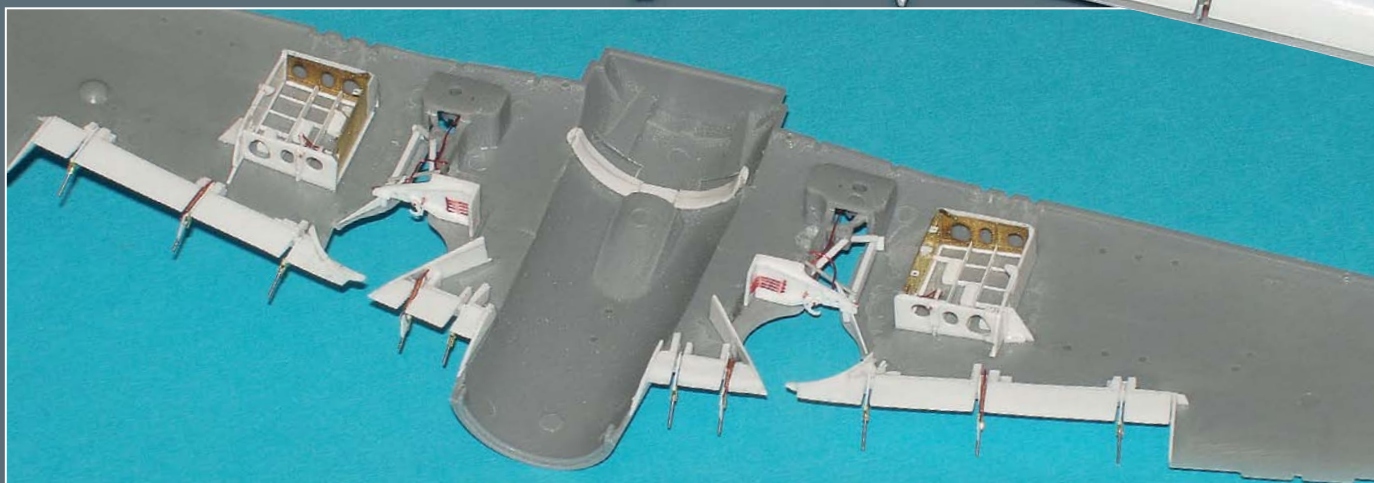


Interior painting

I used the equivalent of FS 34151 Interior Green from Xtra colour range - X117 for the cockpit. Washes with oil paints and dry brushing techniques were used to give some depth to the detail. For the cockpit, most sources suggest interior green, but armament bays and area behind cockpit are another story. The more sources I read, the more confused I was. Finally I decided to paint the gun bays and insides of cowlings Zinc Chromate Yellow,

for which Testors 1584 was used. Internal parts of rear fuselage were painted light grey, which should be like Grumman grey. It's close to FS 16440, so it's equivalent from Testors was used. Main wheel bays were usually painted the same colour as the surrounding area, so white was the only choice. The tail wheel bay was painted Zinc Chromate Yellow with a white overspray.



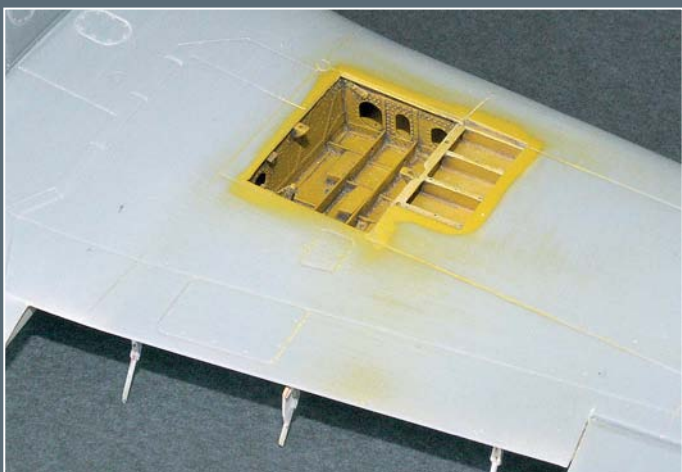
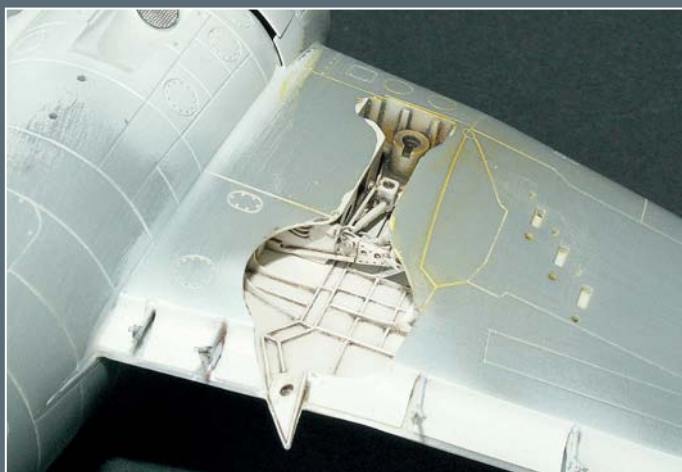


Wings

I wanted to display my Hellcat with flaps down, opened armament bays and correct wheel bays. It meant rather heavy modification of the wings, so this work should be planned carefully to avoid any geometry problems and to enable painting and assembly. Flaps and gun covers were cut off, also almost all moulded in details of gear bays was deleted, only the base for legs were preserved to avoid problems with assembly and geometry. Appropriate areas were thinned to create more scale thickness edges. Main walls were created using plastic card, some of them fitted to

upper and other to lower wing halves. After the flaps were deleted the rear profile of wing had to be created. I didn't like gun bay castings, so only the etched parts and plastic card were used to make walls. During this process the fit of lower and upper wing halves was checked frequently. After the basic shapes were ready the wheel and armament bays were detailed with scratchbuilt items, plastic card and copper wire were the main materials used. I also didn't like the guns, so an Aires set was purchased separately and fitted to the gun bay. Another problem

were wheels which were simply too thin. They were cut in half and glued together again after plastic disc was inserted. Some sanding followed and the tread was restored using mini saw for plastic. The flap parts were glued together, scrap plastic was used to fill gaps and the correct shape was obtained using a sanding stick. Gaps in wing profile were cut to accommodate imitation hinges. Steel wire was used to connect the flaps and wing, after some fitting the correct flap position was achieved and then hinges were detailed.



HELLCAT



Airframe assembly

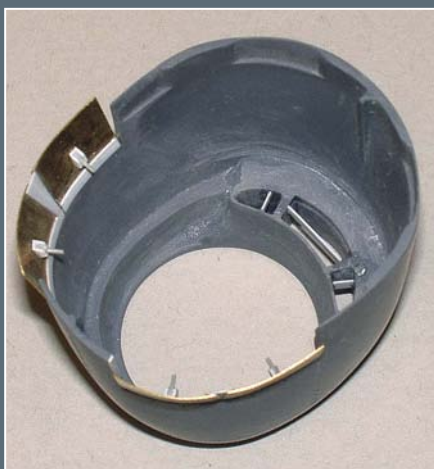
At this stage fuselage halves could be joined, super glue was used for this task. Some sanding and rescribing of panel lines followed. Since I devoted some attention to the cockpit, I wanted to display the canopy in the open position. Unfortunately, the plastic part is too thick, so a Squadron vacformed replacement was achieved. After it was cut off carefully, frames were strengthened with some plastic strips. Only the sliding portion from the Squadron canopy was used, and the windshield from box was glued to the fuselage. Appropriate areas were masked off with EZ Masks.

Wing halves were also glued together and surface detail restored. Fuselage and wing fit was good, so subassemblies were joined without any problems. Horizontal stabilizers were also fitted. Other small items like gun and wheel bay covers, flaps were prepared for painting. Appropriate areas were masked off.

I decided to detail up the plastic kit engine instead of using a resin replacement. After all not much of it will be visible on the finished model. Lots of reviewers and modellers have pointed out the wrong shape of the engine cowling in the front view. As it is not correct, I added a corrected engine cowling made by Cutting Edge. It looks better, but some cleaning was necessary. Also cowling flaps from an etched set were incorporated and small details added.

Painting and final assembly

White was airbrushed unevenly on the grey plastic to create some shading. Then it was masked off, upper surfaces were sprayed with mix of grey and brown paint, and further camouflage colours applied the same way as the white. Humbrol and Model Masters enamels were used. After the airframe had dried it was airbrushed with Humbrol clear gloss from the bottle, because it's not



HELLCAT



yellowing as the one from the can. It's a different kind of paint, it seems to be always wet, but it's a great coat for decals. An Aeromaster decal set was used as it provides markings for Stambook's aircraft. I couldn't find many images of original VF-27 Hellcats with the shark mouth. The shapes of eye decals were trimmed to correct their shape and after application retouched with brush. Microset and Sol were used to help decals conform to models surface, whole process went smoothly. The Number "17" on right wing was painted on. Once dry a clear coat was airbrushed and decal film edges sanded slightly. The process was repeated until smooth surface was achieved. Exhaust stains were airbrushed with different shades of grey and brown. Then whole airframe was sprayed with clear matt Pactra and some weathering added using dry brushing techniques. Panel lines were darkened with artist's oil paints, but only in areas near the engine, were most liquid leakages, oil stains and other weathering occurs. Other panel lines were darker due to initial shading and they were left untouched. I tried to replicate characteristic effect of burned metal near exhaust pipes with oil paints. I'm satisfied with the end result. Finally the whole kit was airbrushed with mix of clear gloss and matt Pactra.

In the final stage all small details were assembled. It's great kit but oversimplified in some areas. Use of aftermarket details is highly recommended. It was fun to build and looks great in my collection.





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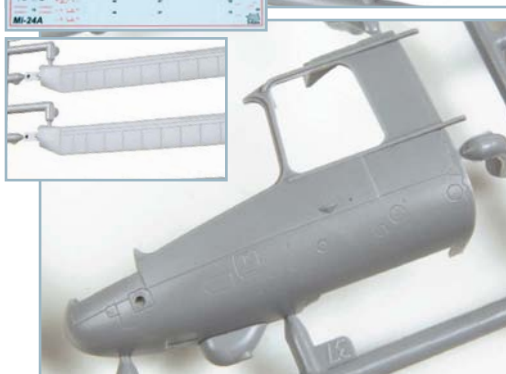
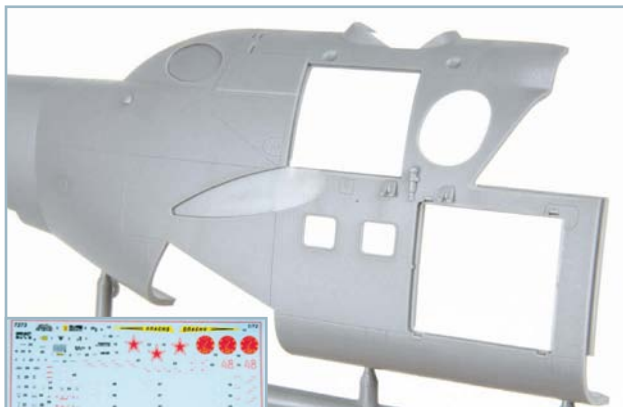
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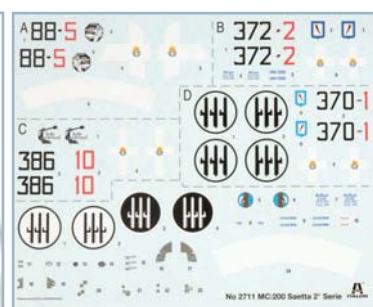
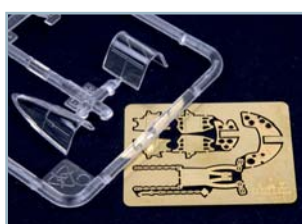
AIR BORN new releases



Zvezda 1:72 MI-24A HIND

Another fine HIND from Russia's Zvezda, this release is the MI-24A version of attack helicopter. Zvezda's kits still have the no-nonsense approach of many Eastern European producers but the kits themselves just get better and better. The moulding finesse of this kit is as good as anything you'll see; particularly impressive are the ultra fine panel lines and scale thickness to the cowlings which can be left open displaying a fully detailed engine. Some very fine and small parts will keep you on your toes but you'll have a very finely detailed model from the box, even without photoetch. The inclusion of quality pilot figures, which rather than looking like an afterthought match the rest of the kit for quality, is a nice inclusion. The rotor head also displays fine detail and the

blades themselves come moulded with realistic droop which looks excellent. Clear parts come bagged for protection and are well also crisp and well moulded. Decals are a weak point of the kit not being to the same standard as the plastic I'm afraid with two Russian options on offer which may look better in position over the camo pattern. These Zvezda HINDs have great respect with helicopter modellers and still to my knowledge are the only 1:72 kits of the subject with the correct canted fuselage and offer fantastic detail straight from the box, superb beautifully detailed kits and very good value for money. Thanks to The Hobby Company who import Zvezda kits into the UK.



Italeri 1:48 MC.200 Saelia 2a Serie

The quirky little Saelia (lightning) does make a lovely model in 1:48 and thus has been covered by several manufacturers, Italeri surely the obvious manufacturer of this famous little Italian. I must admit to not knowing the differences with the 2a version which this release depicts, but do know this still looks a very nice kit indeed. A reasonable number of parts offers a speedy but well detailed build from the two sprues, a photoetched fret offering a boost (mainly the cockpit) in the detail stakes, the multi layered instrument panel should be particularly nice. The bulbous engine

cowl can be left with a panel removed to reveal the multi-part FIAT radial. Positional wing flaps are a nice touch (although the tail remains fixed) and the landing gear is nicely done with weighted tyres and photoetched parts. A three part canopy allows an open display option and the sharp decal sheet offers four Italian versions with attractive camo patterns to test your freehand airbrush abilities. A really nice looking kit but I do hate those photographic instruction plans! Thanks to the Hobby Company, importers of Italeri kits into the UK.



Airfix 1:48 Westland Lynx AH-7

Not having seen Airfix's earlier releases of the Navy Lynx we were keen to get our hands on the Army AH-7 version which is recent to the market, but as even Airfix had none in stock this surely bodes well for sales! Hobby Link Japan to the rescue with a sample in a rather fetching and stout package (micro-flute corrugated if you must know...). Inside are four pleasingly coloured sprues and one in clear, a decal sheet to mark three versions and a nice fold-out painting and marking guide. As this is our first look at an Airfix Lynx I must say we were pretty much stunned at the finesse of moulding and level of detail of this kit, as good as anything released of late by any manufacturer with sharp in fine detail throughout especially across the airframe surfaces and nicely rendered quilted interior panels. Starting with the cockpit, the tinkerers among us will find room for improvement with

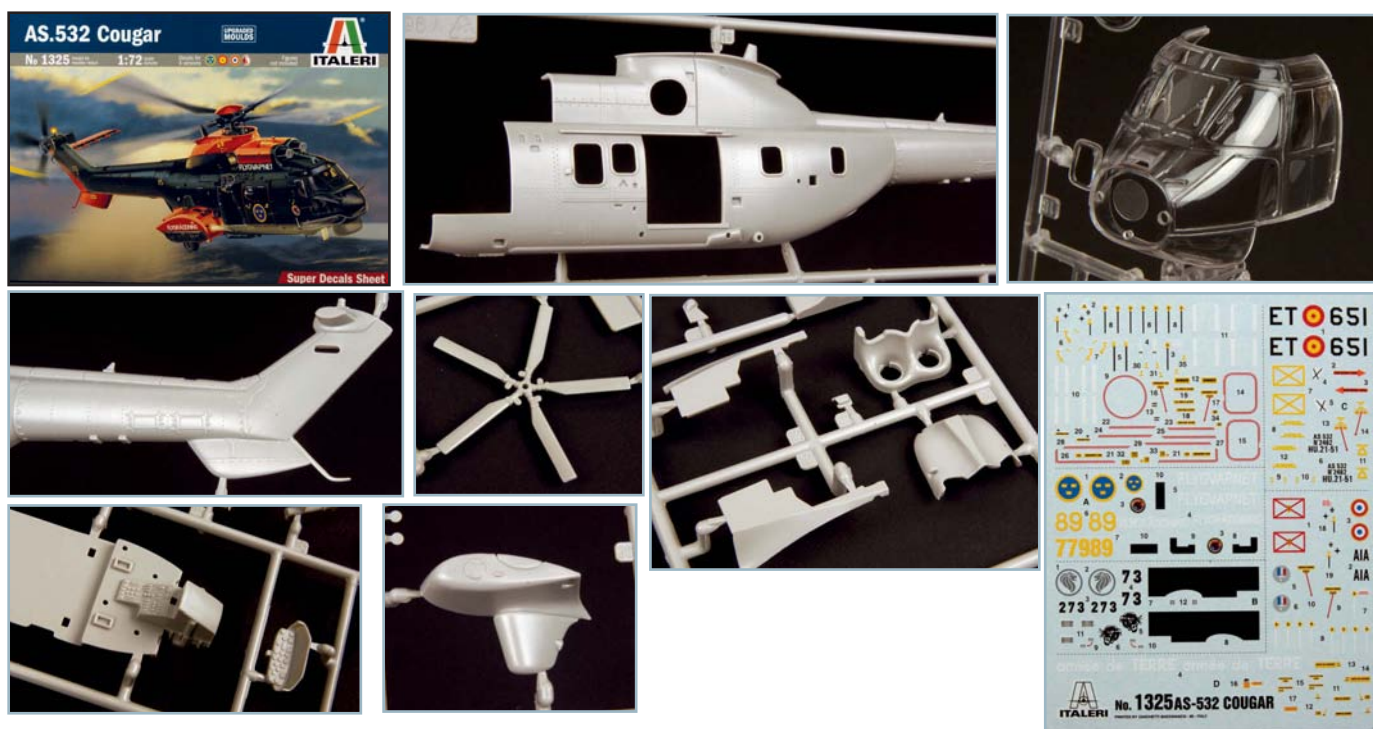
moulded-on seatbelts and decal instruments present, but the front office looks decent from the box. As mentioned, the interior quilting looks superb as do the natural looking seat cushions, all can be shown-off with twin sliding doors as positionable separate parts. Another option is to display folded blades with the rotor head and intakes showing good detail. Missile pods and GPMG look nice and will give a purposeful look to the finished model. The sprue runners and attachment points are quite chunky and some of the two hundred and thirty-odd parts will require some careful surgery to remove intact. Airfix tend to market their products at the more mainstream / toy store market, this is one seriously good kit that the more serious (read fussy!) modeller won't be disappointed with. Excellent!



Dragon 1:32 Messerschmitt Bf.110D-3

Dragon have released another version of their impressive large scale Bf 110s, this time its the D-3 which featured the underbelly ETC 500 bomb rack, extended fuselage tail and new wing mounted fuel tanks. The kit is still very impressive with very detailed engines and separate cowlings and a superbly detailed cockpit complete with photoetched seat belts. The nose MG17 mountings are actually replicated as are the belly mounted 20mm MG FF. Surface detail is excellent with impeccable panel line detail but not a fully rivetted finish. Two large clear sprues provide the canopy parts which can be modelled open or closed and one feature I really like are the optional open sliding side

windows. The kit is not without its niggles however. The exhaust pipes are moulded with solid ends, fortunately Quickboost offer corrected versions. All the control services are moulded in place which will speed up assembly but will frustrate those who want to angle the rudders or drop the flaps. The kit comes with a choice of four different schemes including an Iraqi aircraft but you will need to find your own tail swastikas. Still a very impressive kit but I am sure I am not alone in wishing that rather than offering different C/D versions Dragon would release a G-4 Nightfighter in this scale, that would be something!



Italeri 1:72 AS.532 Cougar

Another re-vamped tooling including a 'Super Decal Sheet' from Italeri here with their version of the updated Puma / Eurocopter. Not having the original version of this kit to hand we can't vouch for the tooling upgrades to the original release but the two pale grey sprues are high quality and typical of Italeri's helicopter kits promising a straightforward build with very good levels of detail, surely sharper than the older Airfix / Heller release. Airframe detail is very subtle with fine rivets and panel lines as close to 1:72 as could be expected. As with the majority of 'copter kits the clear glazing is

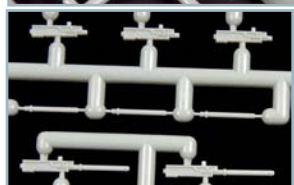
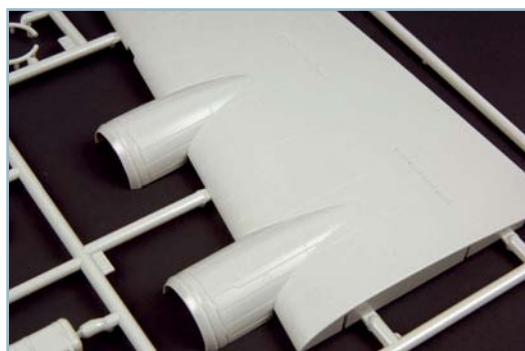
prominent and the quality of the clear parts certainly matches the rest of the plastic. The instructions highlight throughout the four possible versions which can be built from this kit, Swedish 3rd Helicopter Squadron 2006, Republic of Singapore Air Force, 125th Squadron 2011, Spanish Army Helicopter Bn. 2008 and a French Army version from 1996. The decal sheet is small for one of Italeri's 'Super' sheets but quality is first rate. Probably the least exciting of our trio of choppers in this issue but competition is stiff! A very decent release of the subject nevertheless.



Meng 1:72 Mansyu Ki-98

Fancy something different? This little piston engine experimental aircraft from Japan appeared late in 1945 and shares design features with the sleek Shinden fighter but with its unique twin-tail and retractable tricycle landing gear gives a very unusual look indeed. This is Meng Models of China's second aircraft kit, we've had some insight into the company with some of their armour kit releases and this kit follows suit for the high quality presentation and production. The excellent box-art reveals two simple pale grey sprues, a clear canopy and decal sheet. Moulding is first rate with nice fine surface detail including delicate rivets and nice feathered edges to control surfaces (which are designed in a fixed position). The simple assembly offers the usual option of

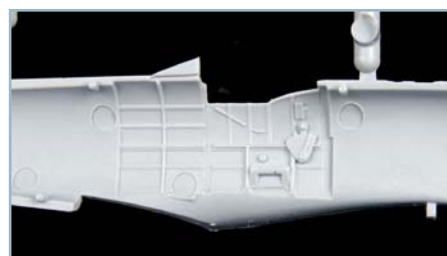
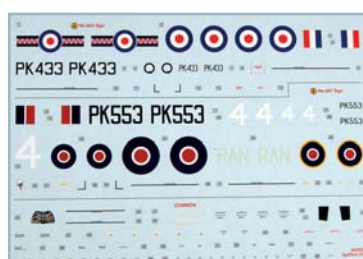
undercarriage retracted or raised and the expected design of two-part fuselage and tail sections. The Meng Kayaba is reported to fit together very well and I'd expect this kit will do just that also giving a really simple, well detailed project and with not a lot of available reference we can forget the worry of any extra work or corrections. Three striking schemes are offered on the top-quality instructions and decal sheet which I can only presume are speculative as the prototype appears to have been destroyed to avoid the development falling into Russian hands. Great to see genuine 'new' kits on the market and especially when they're of such nice quality.



Revell 1:72 B-17F 'Memphis Belle'

Maybe your first thought (as mine was) is remembering how much I enjoyed the movie many years ago and the general public interest it created (in the UK we're waiting to see if 'Red Tails' has the same effect). So what of Revell's kit of the legendary B-17? An obvious kit to follow the G version released a while back, this kit still impresses on opening the box, even more so than the original new breed of B-17 as the sprues are moulded in a more friendly (than the silver) light grey which gives a much better impression of the fine surface detail. Great features of this kit (as with the G version I built back in issue 34) are the full interior detail including the option to display with an open bomb-bay, and multi-part engines. The design of the wing spars is excellent and the overall fit of the larger components very good indeed remembering no need to pop the top off the filler, a little sanding and polishing of the joints sufficed. As with many small scale kits the panel gaps and surface details may look a little 'out' at first, but the painting

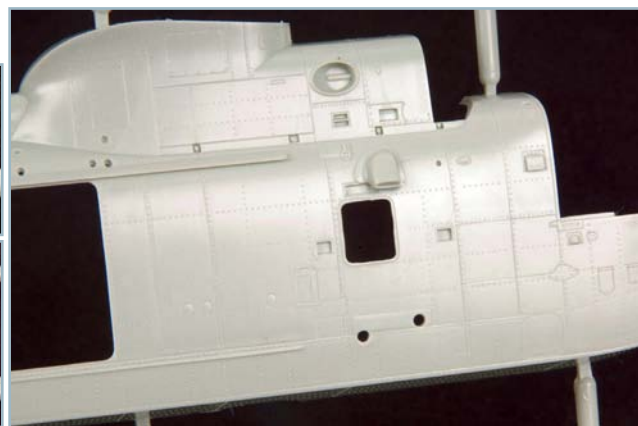
reduces them to a realistic looking level and rivets may have been too much to expect- a job for the masochists amongst you! This is quite an involving build due to the extensive interior detail and obvious marathon of masking with all that glass but a very satisfying and value for money kit. Revell have also included an alternative marking to the Memphis Belle with another famous B-17 'Shamrock Special' on the quality decal sheet. My small gripe with this kit is the thick appearance of the clear nose, the transparent sprue is well done but this is such a prominent feature on the finished model which I'm not sure how to best overcome. Still a very impressive kit on this latest outing with the bonus of being very affordable and widely available. You really can't ask for more! Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Airfix 1:72 Supermarine Spitfire F Mk.22

'Airfix' and 'Spitfire' are words that go hand-in-hand in our hobby and will give many modellers of a certain age that warm nostalgic feeling- how many of us cut our modelling-teeth on one of those little blister packed bunch of pale blue sprues? Here's a brand new production for the twenty first century, the principle of kits remains the same but the latest tooling technology has seen Airfix producing some very nice new kits under the Hornby group banner. The compact and colourful little box houses three pale grey sprues with a pleasing matt finish and even more pleasing is the fine detail, very fine panel lines, beautifully thin prop blades, wheel well detail, weighted tyres etc, many features you'd expect

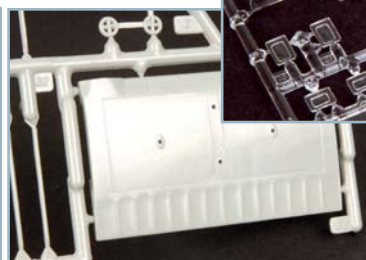
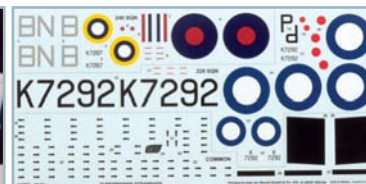
from more expensive kits. The small clear sprue is equally impressive with an open canopy option included. Decals are the icing on the cake, printed by Cartograf the quality is top-notch and we're offered two versions of post-war aircraft which weren't based far from us here at AIR Modeller: No.607 (Co. Durham) Squadron, RAF Ouston 1948 and No.603 (Edinburgh) RAF Turnhouse 1951. Some very fine stencilling and general markings are also included. It's a pleasure to see Airfix producing such quality kits which will appeal to both their 'toy shop' mass market and the more serious modeller, if only my eyesight was as good as it was when I built my first Airfix kits!



Revell 1:72 Seaking Mk.41 (45 years SAR)

Revell's well respected Seaking kit gets a new lease of life with special decals representing one of the Kiel based air sea rescue machines of the 5th German Naval Air Squadron of 2003. This kit's re-release will be welcomed by Seaking builders as at first inspection you get pretty much what you'd need in the box to produce most versions, certainly more predominant features such as the two versions of radar dome and tail rotor. This kit shows no signs of ageing at all, the nice mat finished styrene really shows the fine detail, still impressive is the delicate airframe rivet detail (also extending to the underside of the fuselage and the amount of interior detail for such a reasonably priced kit, seating and

instrument facias particularly well rendered. A sprue of armourments is still in the box should you wish to build a different version using aftermarket decals. The decals in this release are excellent to represent the Anniversary aircraft but a nice touch is that another set of markings is included to produce an experimental four tone scheme (German Marine again) from 1986. Great out of the box detail with parts for other versions included. At Revell's great value for money, stock-up while you can if you love the Seaking. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Revell 1:72 Supermarine Stranraer

If you're a flying boat fan, you're sure to have acquired the vintage Matchbox kit in 1:72 of the Stranraer at some point (first released thirty four years ago!) this new release from Revell is a bit of a mixed blessing as it is that very same kit and not a new state-of-the-art tooling, good news is that the Matchbox kit is a decent old thing anyway and this boxing will be easy to get your hands on. The four pale grey sprues look so much better than the multi-coloured Matchbox offerings of old, and although some of the detail is crude by today's standards you still have a very solid base to build on should you wish to add some refinement. Moulding

looks very clean considering and the complex fuselage shape makes for a very attractive model and also quite sizeable in 1:72. One thing that's sure to be past it's best if you have the old kit is the decals, Revell provide a very nice sheet with two versions including rows of turn-buckles for the wing rigging which must be a touch over-scale for 1:72? Still a decent kit of the old girl and with some extra work could be a lovely display piece. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Fieseler Fi 156 Storch 1938 - 1945

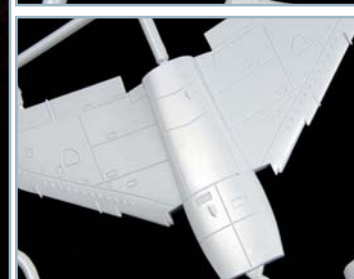
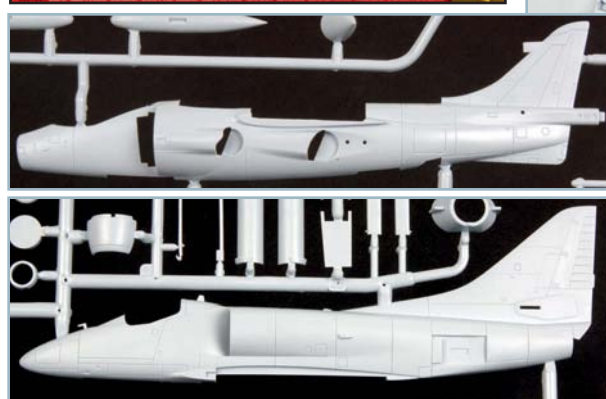
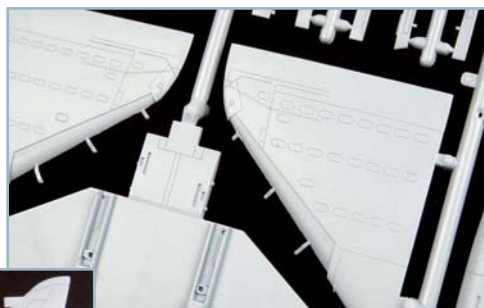
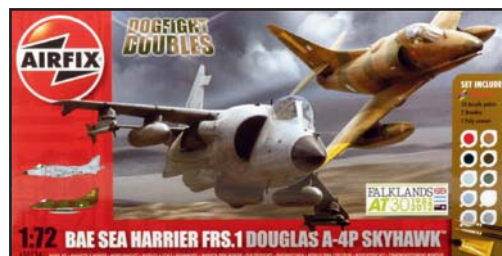
By Dariusz Karnas

Softback B5 portrait format, 176 pages

The famous long-legged liaison aircraft 'Storch' comes under the spotlight with this new MMP release in the chunky little 'Yellow Series'. These MMP books are packed full of excellent reference, this being no exception with everything you could want to aid a modelling project with all of the war-time versions covered. Each version is detailed with descriptive text, period photographs and a huge selection of colour profiles along with technical details backed by drawings. A good portion of the book is dedicated to colour 'walk-around' shots of a selection of preserved and restored

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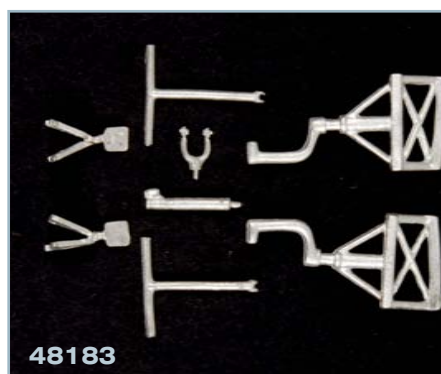
aircraft focussing on different sections in detail for great modelling help should you be detailing one of the available kits (Tamiya's 1:48 and Tristar's 1:35 being excellent recently tooled kits). MMP are wise with their inclusion of 1:35 plans to suit the Tristar kit (an unusual scale aimed at armour modellers spreading their wings with great diorama potential), these are printed on separate folded sheets along with 1:48 and 1:72 drawings. Another recommended one-stop reference from the very affordable MMP range.



Airfix 1:72 Dogfight Double Sea Harrier FRS.1 & A-4P Skyhawk

Thirty years anniversary of the Falklands War is commemorated by this Airfix set of the British and Argentine foes. The Harrier is a couple of years old now but the Skyhawk is new to the Airfix catalogue and the comparison between the two kits certainly shows Airfix to be heading in the right direction. An attractive open-ended outer contains a sturdy inner carton containing the two aircraft kits, a display stand and ten colours of acrylic paint and a couple of brushes (the set marketed towards a gift-set type of purchase). The Skyhawk is of most interest being a new release and looks to offer a good standard of detail for a simple build. Surface detail is much finer than the Harrier (the Harrier's panel gaps are more like troughs!) and the design of the kit looks very promising and is crisply moulded. Following the usual format, the starting point is the cockpit which is good incorporating the nose

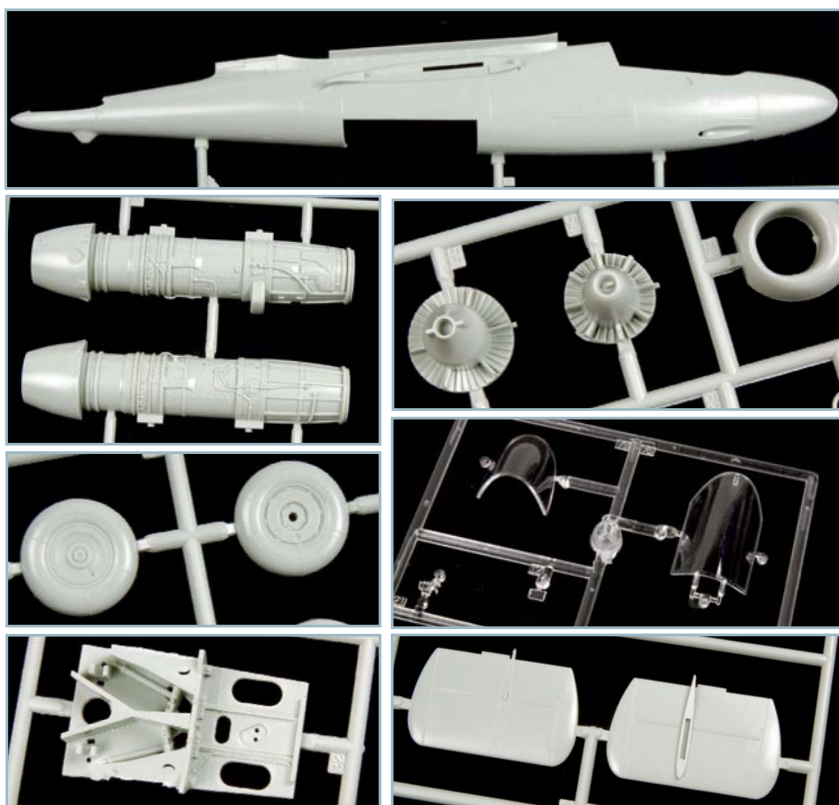
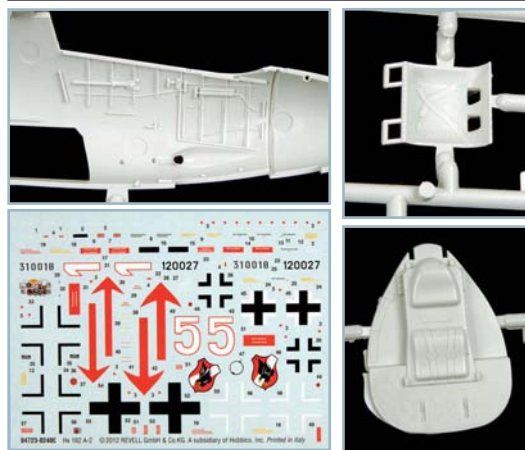
wheel bay detail to the underside, good detail carries on with the airbrakes, landing gear and a selection of ordnance being nicely rendered. The Harrier, for me, is marred by those heavy panel lines, it does look a nice kit other than that and has a few advantages over the Esca/Italeri kit (which in the last issue I mistakenly stated has raised panel lines as they're so finely recessed!) and both will cause constant debate over the internet forums no doubt as to which is best. A very well printed decal sheet is unique to this set offering one option each for specific Falklands War aircraft 1 ZA177, 809 Naval Air Squadron, HMS Hermes and Skyhawk C-228 Gruppo 5 de Casa, Fuerza Aerea Argentina. Encouraging signs from the Skyhawk for future Airfix releases and certainly great value.



Scale Aircraft Conversions

SAC's expanding catalogue of replacement white metal landing gear continues in all scales starting with 1:72 72045 is designed to fit the Hobby Boss F-4 Tomcat and 72046 for the Airfix F.4 / F-86 Sabre (including 5 gram nose ballast). 1:48 is well catered for starting with 48177 for Hasegawa's P-51, 48178 is for all manufacturers versions of the Ta 154 Moskito, 48179 for the Trumpeter F9F Panther, 48180 will upgrade your Academy

ROKAF T-50B, Hasegawa's P-39 / P-400 is catered for with 48181, 48182 is for the Fw 190 from DML and finally 48183 is designed for the Czech Master UC-78 / T50. In 1:32 32066 beefs up the Revell / Monogram F3F-3 Gulfhawk and in the huge 1:24 a set to support Trumpeter's Spitfire Mk.IV/VI with set 24003. Full details of the range can be found at www.scaleaircraftconversions.com



Revell 1:32 He162A-2 'Salamander'

Revell have done the decent thing and re-released their excellent 'Volksjager', the '162. with new box-art and decals, this is thankfully the only difference I can recall looking over the pale grey sprues. This kit really has so much to offer, in big 1:32 there's great detail on show but with its stubby wings the finished piece won't take over the display case, it's also terrific value for money and with under one hundred parts offers a swift build. Moulding is still sharp with a tiny amount of flash here and there, the metal parts of the airframe exhibit fine panel gaps and fixings and the wing tips and control surfaces are good and thin at their edges. A well

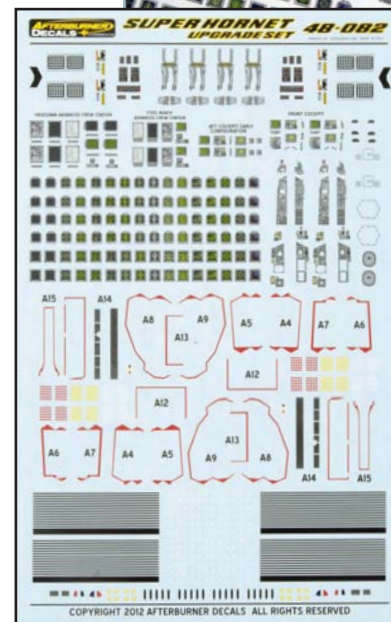
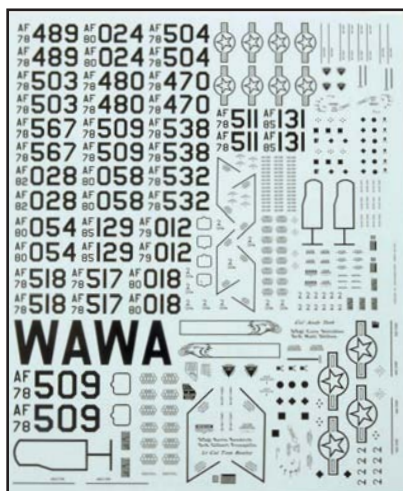
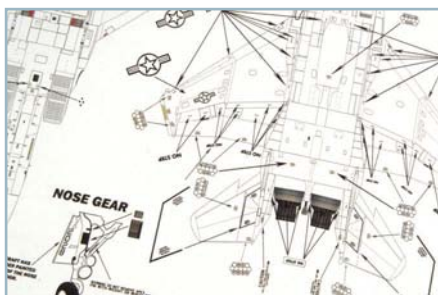
detailed engine has the option of displaying the clam cowling open, the cockpit and wheel wells also offer a good contrast of intricate detail against the simple airframe. If you can't help but tinker with your builds check out the wealth of aftermarket parts for this machine, mostly the stunning Aires resin plug-ins. Two marking options appear on the quality decal sheet, 'white 5' and 'white 1' both of 1/JG1 at Leck. Revell quality and value at it's very best, what's not to like?! Keep an eye on. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Italeri 1:72 Spitfire F Mk.VII

More to excite the small scale Spit' fan, this time it's the high-altitude Mk.VII with its characteristic pointed wing and tail tips. First impressions are good of the two sprues, detail being impressive as with the Airfix Mk.22 kit and a comparable number of parts promising a simple build with some very nice, fine detail. The lower wings are as the Airfix kit, a single part providing a stable base for the fuselage and upper wing surfaces. The engine cowl and wing tips will need some careful alignment being supplied as separate parts as are the four prop blades which

could prove fiddly to get sitting at the correct angle. As with any mention of 'Spitfire' in the modelling community, a great deal of debate ensues regarding shapes and sizes which we'll leave to the experts, based on production quality this looks a very decent kit from the box with the usual upgrades to apply should you wish. A very sharply printed (albeit very glossy) Cartograf decal sheet provides generic stencils etc and two options of No. 616 Squadron 1944 and a grey / blue scheme of No. 602 based in Orkney 1944.



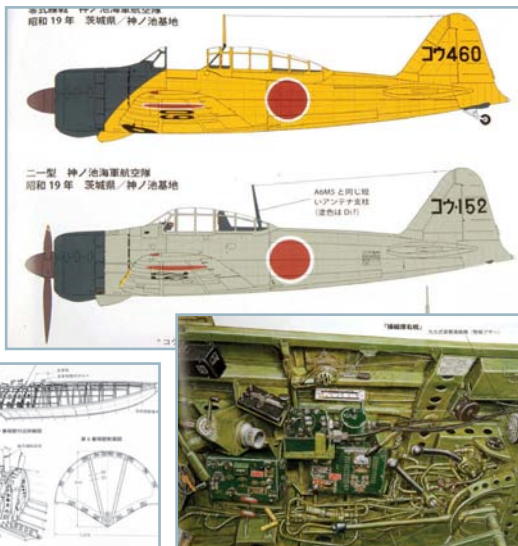
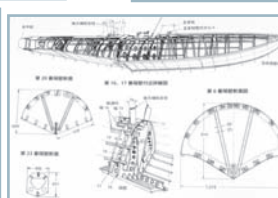
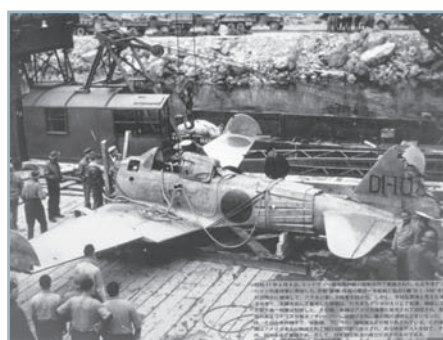
Afterburner Decals

A couple of releases of markings from the Guys at Afterburner, the first (48 081) being for the F-15 C/D Eagle '65th Aggressor Squadron' for the Hasegawa kits in 1:48 (also would fit the Academy kits) with a bonus of 1:32 markings for the mighty Tamiya kit. This is a bumper set with twenty two different sets of markings in total over two large sheets and one small section with the metallic '57th Wing' badge. Very comprehensive instructions are supplied across six double sided colour sheets detailing the Blue Flanker, Desert Flanker and Digital Splinter schemes along with generic stencilling and excellent detail notes on

colours and specific aircraft. The decals themselves are by Cartograf so we can be assured of the best print quality available. Excellent presentation and top quality, highly recommended.

Set 48 082 upgrades your 1:48 Hasegawa Super Hornet markings including instrument display panels, ejector seats and seat belts, gear doors and legs, wing pylons and even exhaust internals, again, superb print quality from Cartograf and detailed illustrated guides supplied.

www.afterburnerdecals.com has more details and the available range.



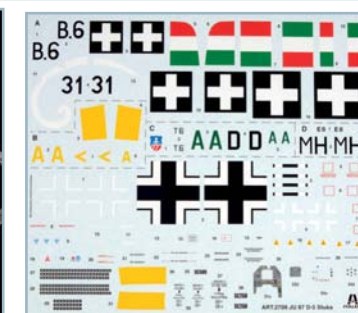
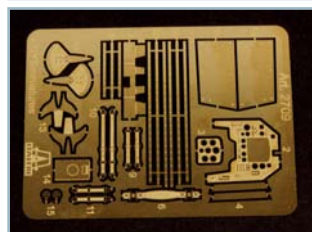
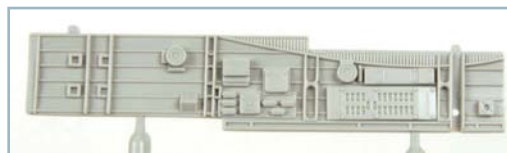
Mitsubishi A6M 'Zero' fighter Part 1 Model Art Profile 12

Softback portrait format, 156 pages

Our friends in the far east, Model Art, have sent us a copy of their latest 'Profile' volume on the Zero. Being Japan's most famous native fighter of WWII this is a hugely popular modelling subject with this first volume focusing on the M2, M2b, M2-N and M2-K. Only some of the headings have English text and a translated section on colours and markings, so we can only comment on the visual reference which is plenty and varied. Something Model Art do very well are their stylised colour illustrations of components and details which are sometimes hard to distinguish if looking at black and white photographs, very easily accessed modelling reference. Detailed technical illustrations cover in-depth the

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www.modelart-shop.jp

airframe, landing gear, canopy and internal components which are presented alongside close-up period black and white photos and general overall views of the Zeros in action. Around twenty pages are devoted to colours and marking profiles of different versions although there isn't a huge variation of colour schemes. A look at modelling three kits is quite brief, Tamiya's 1:32 A6M2b and Hasegawa's A6M2b in both 1:48 and 1:72 are covered, the 1:48 version having the most useful visual detail of improvements. Well worth a look if you have an interest in Japanese fighters, an attractive book despite the obvious drawback of the language barrier.



Italeri 1:48 Ju 87 D-5

Italeri build on the good reputation of their Ju-87 B-2 with this new release of the D-5. As expected, many parts are shared with the previous release with excellent detail and quality of moulding throughout the re-vamped sprues to produce this D-5 version. Stuka kits are numerous, this one stands out for its finely rendered surface detail, full Jumo engine (consisting of around twenty parts) with removable canopies and a very welcome little etched fret containing cockpit details (instrument panels, seatbelts etc) and walk-way panels. Top-notch clear parts are present again

allowing combinations of open canopy to show off that interior. New, very stylish, wheel spats and weighted tyres can sit alongside a good option of bomb loads. A nice inclusion are the purposeful looking flame damping exhaust tubes which are suggested for one of the four marking options; 1/NSG9 in Italy 1944. Other options on the impressive decal sheet are Stab 3/SG2 in Russia, Stab 3/SG3 in Finland and a nice option of a Hungarian aircraft. This is certainly one of Italeri's better kits, a superb out-of-the-box project which represents very good value.



Finescale Model World materials

A company probably familiar to railway modellers under the banner of FMR (Finescale Model Railways) have sent us some product samples which cross-over into our territory, the most interesting is their static grass system. So what's the relevance to aircraft modelling? Well, we've seen many a superb aircraft build marred by a poorly finished base that just doesn't do the model justice, a popular (but not particularly convincing in appearance) is the old railway grass-mat. The method of applying the grass 'flock' as individual strands /blades of grass gives a more realistic finish to your make-shift runway allowing a more natural non-uniform look, especially if applied over an earth colour. FMR can supply various colours and lengths of grass to suit different scales with sizes from 3mm up to 6.5mm and seasonal colours, but now for the clever part. Commonly referred to as 'static' grass, the strands will stand up realistically if a gentle static charge is applied which is exactly what their applicator has been designed to do. A pair of



AA batteries are housed in the handle which has a crocodile clip wired to it, insert a tack or nail into your chosen base for the clip to bite to, depress a button on the handle as you sprinkle your chosen flock and hey-presto! Your grass stands to attention as you can see from our test. Full details can be found at www.finescalemodelworld.co.uk along with how to order. While you're on the web site there's some other products to check out. Two solvent adhesives are available in an economical 100mm tin Plastic Bond-It and the more industrial Plastic Weld-It used for various plastics including acrylic. Fast-Grab Glue is ideal for the static grass being a pva type glue (drying clear and being non-solvent perfect for canopies). Three pre-paint cleaners are also available to remove any oils or grease prior to your first coat of paint, in particular 'Silicon-Buster' to remove mould release agents sometimes found with resin parts in particular.

CHARLES WHALL'S MEDITERRANEAN EDUARD 1 | 48TH BF110E MENACE

Representing W.Nr.3866 Hans Joachim-Jabs, Staffelkapitan 6./ZG76, based at Argos in 1941, this was the first type of Bf110E that saw service in the Mediterranean theatre. Hans Joachim-Jabs succeeded in shooting down 22 aircraft by day and a further 28 following his attachment to IV./NJG 1 (Night-fighters) in November 1942.





Eduard have served the modeller very well by offering many variants of the Bf110 and the Royal Class set allows a lot freedom when deciding on which variants to build.

I chose to build the 'E' variant as it has a number of interesting features that distinguish it from its predecessors (there is also an option to build the 'Tropical' 'E' variant with the addition of resin cast tropical air filters (and alternative engine nacelles). One of the main external differences is the extended rear fuselage first introduced to the 'D' variant and often referred to as the 'boat-tail'. The extended tail cone houses a dinghy which can be released by the rear gunner via a cable that runs along the top half of the fuselage.

Another identifiable feature of the 'E' was the introduction of a rectangular outlet on the machine gun cowling placed between the two central MG 17 machine guns. The outlet allowed air to circulate around the port engine and fed it back to the cockpit to provide heating. The rear cockpit was heated by an additional intake on the port fuselage under the point where the aerial wire enters the fuselage.

Overall, the kit parts are of a high standard, moulded well with fine panel lines, subtle rivet and detail and a stack of photo-etch detail sets, the cockpit details, instrument panels and radio sets being in full colour.

The kit also offers alternative options for a range of add-ons so I chose to make good use of the additional wing-mounted auxiliary long range fuel tanks fuel and also added a 75 Litre auxiliary oil tank that can sometimes be seen beneath the fuselage (first introduced on the 'D' type). The overall effect makes the aircraft look very 'busy'. A nice addition to the box is the etched workshop/maintenance ladder set which came in very useful in adding another dimension to the complete diorama.

Eduard provide a comprehensive range of canopy options too. All parts are suitably thin and very clear and alternative options are available for the front and rear canopies to be displayed open or closed. Thankfully, canopy masks have been included to use on the 'greenhouse' canopy and complex framing! Twelve different and varied marking options are offered over 2 large decal sheets which are beautifully printed. If that wasn't enough, Eduard also had the great idea of including a 1/4 scale replica of the Bf110 instrument panel AND a replica Knights Cross which could be used to create a display to complement your 110!

But...the kit is by no means perfect and there are a surprising number of fit issues that I encountered which I will elaborate on.



Construction

All parts were given a thorough clean using washing-up liquid to remove any mould residue and dried. I decided to begin construction by working on the auxiliary fuel and oil tanks and creating the location points in the wings for the mounts as I knew I would forget to do this at a later stage and waste a lot of time holding the wings up to a lamp trying to find the locating holes! The mounts for the tanks are incredibly fragile and I managed to snap two of them attempting to file off the moulding from the sprue mounts-luckily the kit sprues provide enough spares and I imagine I will not make another 110 with wing tanks after this one! In addition to the photo-etched straps and filler caps, I added lead wire to represent fuel/oil lines leading into the wing and belly. All tanks were given a coat of RLM 76 and shaded using a small amount of white added to the base colour. Tamiya pigments and oils were used for staining and general dirt.

So onto the cockpit which is well catered for, combining photo-etched parts and a wealth of delicately moulded plastic parts. The side walls were attached to the fuselage side and along with the cockpit tub were given a coat of RLM 66 as my references showed for late mark 110's. Highlights were added using various shades of grey Model Air acrylics. I then used Abteilung dark brown oils to wash the area to provide additional depth and subtle shadows. Colour for levers and knobs was added using Vallejo acrylics as I find these are more suitable for small detail due to the thickness of the paint. After a very thin final wash of Abteilung Black/Brown oils, the whole lot was given a coat of Model Air flat and satin varnish before closing up. The rear gunner/radio compartment area is very well detailed from the box, but I added some additional wiring using PlusModel lead wire in various sizes 0.2 – 0.6mm. The interior construction is quite time-consuming given the large number of parts but all components went together effortlessly and with the etched detail included there is more than enough detail straight from the box. The fuselage halves went together with no problems and no filler was needed for a change! Test fitting the canopies at this point was necessary to ensure that problems were not encountered after painting. Some prefer to attach clear parts and mask early in the build, but personally I find it easier to leave vulnerable parts until later on and attach after painting the main fuselage.

WING TANKS WITH ADDITIONAL PE DETAILS



REAR GUNNER POSITION WITH DETAIL OF RING SIGHT



Exterior construction & details

I wanted to show one of the engines exposed for maintenance and as Eduard do not offer this as an option, I used the excellent Daimler Benz 601 N power-plant from Quickboost. The engine required some extra plumbing using lead wire of various sizes and the challenge was to now shoe-horn it into the cavity where the engine cowling should be. I blocked up the rear of the cowling with a scratch-built firewall and inserted a mount on which to secure the engine from beneath. The air intake would hide any construction here. After spraying the engine with Tamiya flat black I highlighted lighter shades using Tamiya weathering pigments and added the additional plumbing. The engine bearers were then attached and the whole section fitted very snugly into the cowling cavity. The flaps above the exhausts were made using styrene and I had the inner one folded out to expose more of the engine. The overall effect was very satisfying! Quickboost also supply the additional cowling parts which make a nice addition to the base.

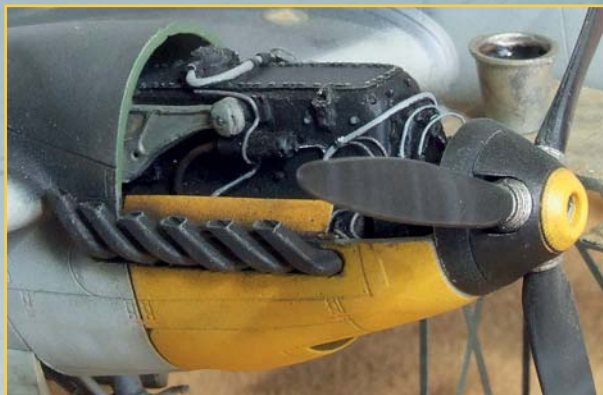
I decided to drop the elevators so set about cutting them from the main fin and filed out the actuator/hinge points. After adding new styrene hinges, they were fixed back in place. The kit also allows the ailerons to be positioned so I moved them slightly off centre as seen in some images.

One of the major complaints about this kit is the fit of the upper engine cowlings so I was glad I only had to work with the port cowling in this case! There seems to be a rather big step between where the top of the cowling meets the wing moulded part so I applied pressure on that area while the glue set in order that the parts were flush, this in turn caused fit issues in the curved areas just behind the leading edge above the exhausts. Careful manipulation, filler and praying solved the problem eventually! An oversight on Eduard's part maybe but it seems odd that modern kit could be released with such obvious alignment problems...and there were more to come. I found the nose cone quite troublesome where it joined the fuselage it created quite a deep panel line join which was remedied with a small amount of filler.

The next assembly job was the wings and while the join at the upper wing root was near perfect, there were some surprising alignment issues where the underside of the wings joined the fuselage. This area required some considerable sanding to eradicate the step that had appeared at the join. Much test-fitting later, I finally managed to produce a result I was satisfied with.

Onto the undercarriage and the kit supplies a nicely detailed set here. The three-piece tail wheel is very nice and looks much better than the usual solid moulding. I added some hydraulic lines to the main undercarriage and again there are some very delicate parts to contend with, but builds into a very sturdy structure. The undercarriage doors were weathered using a thin mix of Tamiya flat black/brown and dirtied up a bit with oil staining etc. Only the late type wheels were included in the kit (fine in my case) but an aftermarket set will need to be added if an earlier variant is to be built.

RIGHT DETAIL OF THE QUICKBOOST DB601 N WITH ADDED LEAD WIRE. NOTE THE FILLER AROUND THOSE TRICKY COWLINGS!





AIRFIELD EQUIPMENT AFTER A COAT OF MR SURFACER 1000



DETAIL OF WHEEL WELLS, UNDERCARRIAGE WITH ADDITIONAL WIRING



Eduard seemed to have overlooked the addition of a retractable access ladder so I built one from styrene rod, which was much less hassle than I had anticipated. The air intake detail on the starboard fuselage under the fixing point for the aerial was not included on the kit part so I opened up the area and added the intake using brass shim. The canopy and screen were dipped in Johnsons Klear (but didn't really need it) and I added the photo etched armoured windscreen brass grab handles once dry, then masked and painted.

Prior to fixing the canopies in place I added a sighting ring (no mean feat) and an aluminium cocking mechanism to the rear gunner's MG17 and created a moveable swivel-mount so the gun could be posed in a more 'relaxed' position. The landing light was tinted using Tamiya clear yellow and worked very well!

I tried two different paint schemes on the centre rack ordnance and finally went with the black-green scheme according to references.





Painting and markings

Everything was given a coat of Mr Surfacer 1000 primer and rubbed down with fine Micro-Mesh prior to painting. Pre-shading was carried out using a dark grey rather than black due to the lightness of the main camo colour which is a standard Luftwaffe splinter scheme of Gunze RLM 70/71/65 with tail fins and cowling in RLM04. The nose cone is RLM 21.

Following a coat of Johnsons Klear as a base for the decals, they went on perfectly apart from the shark mouth (Haifisch) markings which did not conform too well to the curves in the nose and following many delicate applications of Micro-Sol, I had to hand-paint the tiny gaps that were created between the join once the solvent was dry.

Additional filtering using lighter shades of the base colours was applied to the splinter scheme and the final finish was lightly post-shaded with the same highly thinned Tamiya black-brown. After the usual panel washes, general weathering to the wings and walkway areas was done with Burnt Sienna and Lamp Black Abteilung oils thinned with odourless turpentine, gradually building up the effects of oil/exhaust staining over the wings around the engines and surrounding areas. This is quite time consuming but the oils are very easy to control and results are well worth it. To create a metallic sheen to the engine and MG 17, I lightly dusted graphite powder using a cotton bud-I find this is great for creating a realistic metal effect.

After a light dusting of Tamiya and MiG pigments for general dirt, minor scuffing was added using a Prismacolor silver pencil and the weathering is complete! Hair was used for the antennae cable with styrene 'cones' for the insulators. The styrene sheet was heated and I pushed a cocktail stick into the surface to create the cone and carefully cut with a scalpel. The cable was then attached using a tiny drop of Cyano glue. A final coat of Vallejo Matt varnish mixed with a little satin sealed everything in and all done!



**VERLINDEN STARTER
CART AIDED WITH A
FEW ADDITIONAL
DETAILS**



Making the base

The base is made from Jelutong with a simple decorative moulding. Cork matting was covered with a layer of PVA and sprinkled with sand and small stones (collected from Taquali airfield in Malta). I then highlighted with various shades of sand colours.

The airfield equipment was added to the base as the 110 looked rather lost on its own. The Verlinden starter cart is a superb little kit and a great addition to any diorama. I added a starter line and sprayed it Tamiya Desert with the usual weathering treatment. I chose to add the old-style wheels to the cart.

The maintenance ladders were incredibly fiddly to construct but add to the overall effect and I added a Verlinden bucket to the platform by the engine. Final additions were wood planks and oil drums to add some balance to the busy front area as a finishing touch.

Final verdict...

This kit is certainly not without its problems but I guess these challenges are what help us develop new skills and techniques and the final results far outweigh the kits disadvantages. Overall, the Royal Class set provides a fantastic range of possibilities regarding C, D and E variants to build, from European and Mediterranean theatres, day and night schemes. I would highly recommend it for beginners who are looking for a straight from the box challenge or the more experienced among you who like to go to town and super-detail everything!

References

Bf110 in Colour Profile 1939-45 John Vasco and Fernando Estanislau.

Messerschmitt Bf110 C, D & E - An Illustrated Study by John Vasco and Fernando Estanislau.





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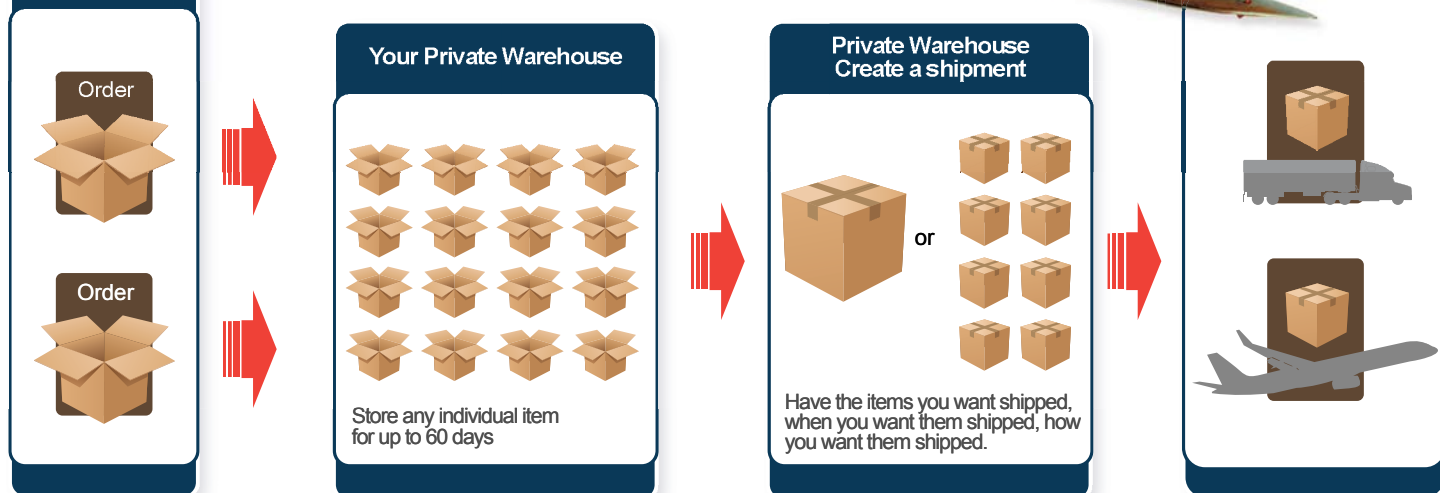


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